

**NATIVE TEACHING METHODS:  
AN EXPLORATION OF THE USE OF TRADITIONAL  
PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE IN THE CLASSROOM**

by

Ruby V. Farrell ©

*A thesis  
submitted in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
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Ruby V. Farrell

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Dedicated to Native children and their Native teachers.

## ABSTRACT

This study explores possible consistent patterns in the teaching methods of Native teachers in northwestern Ontario by examining their use of traditional practical knowledge in the classroom.

The research was conducted in an isolated community of about three hundred residents. Qualitative naturalistic research methods were used in this field research, incorporating informal open-ended interviews, journals, and non-participant observation techniques in the data collection. The research focused on the Native teachers and their interaction with their Native students in the classrooms during a time period of seven school days. The data analysis and interpretation was ongoing throughout the ten day research period. By describing and interpreting the non-verbal intuitive insights to culturally significant, subtle forms of expression in the classroom, the findings offer an insider's view to the practical knowledge of Native teachers.

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## CHAPTER 1

## NATIVE TEACHING METHODS

An Exploration of the Use of Traditional  
Practical Knowledge in the Classroom.

## The Research Problem

Identification of the Problem

The term 'Native learning styles' has been addressed by researchers such as Kaulback (1984), More (1987), Pepper and Henry (1989), Whyte (1986), and Sawyer (1991). Most of the research in this area has focused on the identification and definition of Native students' learning styles, lists of successful teaching strategies for teachers of Native children, and some theories on how these preferred Native learning styles may be linked to the Native students' cultural upbringing. While this research has served to identify specific theories of Native child-rearing practices which may be attributed to the preferred Native learning styles, we are left with its assumption that the teachers of these Native students are non-Native and therefore, making the suggested teaching methods applicable only to them. Current research does not provide information on possible differences to the Native learning styles and its suggested teaching methods if the teacher is a Native person.

### Rationale: Formation of and Approach to the Problem

This study takes the perceived classroom implications of cultural values and child-rearing practices into the classrooms of Native teachers by examining their use of traditional practical knowledge in the classroom.

It is the hope of this researcher that the results of this study will give voice to these former Native learners who are now the Native teachers, and will provide insight to culturally significant forms of interaction between the Native teachers and their Native students. This communication and cultural interaction will then be identified as traditional practical knowledge as it is practised in the Native classroom.

The purpose of this study is to examine the use of traditional practical knowledge in the classroom by Native teachers with many years experience in teaching Native children in Native communities. Research literature in the areas of Native learning styles, teaching Native students, nonverbal communication, cultural transmission, Native teachers, practical knowledge, and Native teacher education programs, will be reviewed in the search for a thread that may link together the concept of a Native teacher's traditional practical knowledge and whether this actually appears,

or how it may be reflected in the classroom.

In the course of the present study, the view of this researcher is that of a Native Ojibwa from northwestern Ontario and the views may not necessarily hold true to other First Nations across the country.

The research methods are qualitative and naturalistic using ethnographic techniques. This study employed formal and informal observation fieldnotes, taped informal open-ended interviews, solicited journals, document collection and analysis.

#### Statement of the Problem

With the greater demand for Native teachers by various Band-operated schools across the north, the situation begs the question why Native teachers would be preferred for teaching positions in these locations. Aside from the fact that Native teachers of this area would not be expected to experience culture shock, and that they would most likely have family ties to the community ensuring long-term positions, they are also expected to possess a cultural sense of the community.

Assuming that Native teachers and their Native students share the same cultural and traditional values of the community, the issues explored in this study are:

- 1) How are Native values and practices reflected in the student and teacher interactions?



- 2) What is traditional practical knowledge as it is used by Native teachers in the classroom?

### Definition of Terms

#### Native Learning Styles

According to the research, 'Native learning styles' are the common patterns or methods in the way Native students learn, the ways in which they learn from the environment, their preference to visual learning, how they process information, and how these learning styles can be attributed to their cultural upbringing (Kaulback, 1984). More's (1987) definition for the term is "the characteristic or usual strategies of acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding by an individual (p.19).

#### Traditional Practical Knowledge

The term "traditional practical knowledge" is derived from the "personal practical knowledge" as defined by Connelly and Clandinin (1988), in which they state that "personal practical knowledge...is in the person's past experience, in the person's present mind and body, and in the person's future plans and actions. Knowledge is not found only 'in the mind'. It is 'in the body' and it is seen and found 'in our practices' (p.25). 'Traditional' indicates cultural inherence of practical knowledge and common experience.

### Sense-Making

J. Peter Rothe (1982) describes "sense-making" by saying that "Students locate and elaborate particulars differently by relying on speech patterns, visual, auditory, cultural and biographical information...they have an implicit understanding (based on community membership) of the speaker's biographical knowledge and his purpose for speaking, the circumstances of speaking, the preceding elements of the conversation and the actual or potential relations between the speaker and listener..." (p.2).

### Non-verbal Communication

Non-verbal communication is the unstated but understood forms of communication between members of a culture. Key (1975), brings these various elements closer together in her definition: "...every normal human being, in whatever culture he lives, responds to and operates within the particular system of nonverbal communication patterns of his society and subsocieties, even as he is able to communicate with words because he automatically responds to that system of verbal communication. The well-known anthropological linguist, Edward Sapir (1927b, p.556), said, "... we respond to gestures with an extreme alertness and one might almost say, in accord with an elaborate and secret code that is written nowhere, known by none, and

understood by all" (p.12). This statement from Sapir is also quoted in Rosenthal, et. al. (1979, p.1).

We do communicate more than we can or dare to say and this is often evidenced by the next choice of words.

### The Research Study

#### Developing the Research: A Personal Ground

Having gone through part of the elementary and all of my secondary education away from my family and home community, I had experienced a sense of negation from the education system directed at my identity as a Native person. In an effort to identify the source of this information, I later became a teacher. This position gave me some insight to specific areas in the curricula which may have been directly linked to my sense of personal offense. This concern has intensified over the years as Native children (including my own), continue to experience difficulties in the education system. I wondered if the employment of Native teachers would make any difference in the education of Native children, and if so, why? At this point, I began to research and listened to some comments from Native teachers and parents, and I discovered that there was a belief that a Native teacher would possess a natural tendency to act in a 'culturally appropriate manner' when teaching Native children. With this in mind, I conducted a mini-pilot

project and found that my assumptions had some merit and in the process, discovered that I had overlooked some areas too common and too familiar to me, for me to have noticed at first glance, an error that gave me vision to see shadows within the shadows.

From this project, came the notion that Native teachers use their practical knowledge when teaching Native students in their own communities. By exploring this practical knowledge, possibly, there would emerge some consistent patterns which could then be referred to as Native teaching methods. This would define and clarify the broad statement of the 'culturally appropriate' way of teaching Native students.

During the course of the field research observations for this thesis, I came to realize that the teaching method itself was embedded in what was to emerge as the 'traditional practical knowledge'.

This formed the foreshadowing of the research questions and the focus of this study.

### The Research Context

The community chosen for this study was selected for its isolated location in that it is accessible only by airplane with skis in winter and airplane with floats in the summer. The time during spring ice break-up and fall lake freeze-up encloses the community

in virtual isolation from the outside world. This does not by any means include isolation from other Native people in the area. The opportunity is always there for ingenious manipulation of technology. One example coming to mind is what is known in the north as the 'northern hovercraft' a method of lashing a snowmachine to each side of a motor boat which then allows for transportation over water and ice during spring ice break-up, or by however the best means that a situation may be adopted to function within the environment. In the Native communities, snowmachines, canoes, and boats with motors, provide the normal means of transportation between and among Native people in the vast areas of land they may tread in a given year.

In this world, the children in the community speak and play in the Native language and are involved in cultural activities within the community. Life in this particular community still reflects the cultural values, activities and language of the people. For this reason, the community with its number of Native teachers was very important for this research.

#### Significance of the Study

The exploration of the traditional practical knowledge of Native teachers would be significant in the field of Native education which would include; Native teacher education institutions, Band schools,

teachers of Native children, research in Native education, and to Native post-secondary students.

The traditional practical knowledge as practised in the classroom would be recognized and valued for its contribution to the holistic education of Native children, its presence in the establishment of a cultural connection to the natal community, and the cultural relevance and identity, so important for the self-esteem of Native children, would be reflected in the teaching by Native teachers. Through these interactions, Native teachers play a major role in the establishment of cultural pride and identity for our students in the education system.

The significance to research would be reflected in the outcome of the study in terms of its relation to the 'Native Learning Styles' research and its trickle-down effect into other areas of Native education.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of this study is the glimpse from the insider's view, the situation as seen and understood by Native teachers, in their own voices, expressing experiences as Native students, and their response to these experiences as Native teachers.

## CHAPTER 2

## LITERATURE REVIEW

## Native Learning Styles

Although there are many theories about what Native learning styles might mean, there are general agreements on how best teachers might approach the particular challenges of having Native students in the classroom. A literature review on Native learning styles by Sawyer (1991) compiles forty-two suggestions for the classroom teacher on the most effective methods of teaching Native children (see Appendix A).

Based on their experience, some Native people may agree with, or at least find some relevance to the Native learning styles research. I recognize that I may respond to this research according to my own personal and professional experience, and particularly on how it relates to my knowledge of the Ojibwa culture.

Preference to Visual Learning

One of the commonly stated characteristics of Native students' learning styles is the preference for the non-verbal or visual method of learning (Sawyer, 1991, p. 99). This will form the main thrust of the 'sense-making' stage of this study.

This review will focus on the research references to the cultural or child-rearing practice theories that

are attributed to this preference to visual learning. Despite economical and technical changes within the Native communities, the studies state that the child-rearing practices have relatively remained the same over many generations (Kaulback, 1984).

Kaulback (1984) attributes these styles of learning directly to the child's cultural upbringing. As he states,

Native children learn by observing and imitating the actions of their parents, elders and older siblings. Basically, in most Native societies, the child is a revered member of the family unit and, as such, is a welcomed spectator and participant to all types of family and community affairs. Indeed, it is not uncommon to see young Native children accompanying their parents (or siblings) to bingo, community meetings, church, or even to their places of employment (p. 32).

Whatever the label, child-rearing practices dictate that young Native children use the tools of observation and playful imitation to learn from their parents, siblings, and elders...the children have, in other words, learned to learn through visual means (p. 33).

Kaulback (1984) goes on to say that the skills and



knowledge acquired by the children are directly related to their exposure to activities, where "verbal instruction is neither offered nor required because the child's close proximity to the observable action makes instruction-giving quite redundant" (p. 33). Kaulback states that because Native students are oriented to visual learning, they are "handicapped in their ability to succeed" (p. 35) in a predominantly verbal learning environment. Whyte (1986) is also of the opinion that the Native child's behaviour in school is directly related to the culture's child rearing practices. Whyte (1986) states that Native children "learn to learn primarily through nonverbal mechanisms such as observational and trial and error learning... This nonverbal mode is thought to be continually reinforced in the home and community by the instructional styles of parents, siblings, and peers" (p. 3). Whyte focuses on two perspectives, the learning style theory which states that "the Indian student is culturally oriented towards visual learning" and the interference theory, that the "Indian child is culturally disposed to quietness in unpredictable social situations" (p. 3). This reference to quietness will be discussed further in the 'use of silence' section of this literature review.

#### Child-rearing Practices

One of the four areas of research cited by More (1987) is the 'traditional learning styles' in which he states, "Watch-then-do...was a primary method whereby the child acquired skills within the family group. Explanations and questions in verbal form were minimized" (p. 23). The article also includes references to child-rearing practices in which the children "were allowed to learn from their mistakes...a policy of non-interference existed...often misbehaviour was ignored so that the child would learn the natural consequences of misbehaviour and learn to be in charge of his or her own behaviour...that grandparents and other elders in the extended family were responsible for much of the teaching of the child" (p. 23).

Pepper and Henry (1989) offer a perspective of the child's inner and outer environment. The inner environment would be his/her hereditary endowment and the outer environment would be the child's family atmosphere, family constellation, and cultural child rearing and discipline practices. Some of the Native values mentioned include, generosity, sharing, cooperation, group harmony, placidity, patience, behavioral expression, concepts of time, and the values of ownership and property. As Pepper & Henry (1989) state, all "these values are generally learned in an informal manner and unconsciously applied" (p. 55).

Some of the traditional child-rearing practices mentioned include, permissiveness, self-exploration, self-discipline, self-direction, self-reliance, freedom of choice, experimentation and testing, questioning and reinventing, and absolute non-interference" (p. 56). Pepper and Henry (1989) state, "It has been noted that Indian children consider question-asking as an interactive strategy found in and reserved for schools. Question-asking generally is not a verbal strategy employed by the Indian people in their day-to-day speech habits" (p. 57). ...Much of the informal learning that takes place in Indian families is non-verbal in nature. ...The result of an upbringing with such a cultural background is that Indian children attending the characteristically highly-verbal school may find themselves in a culturally incoherent situation with an effect approximating culture shock" (p. 57). Much of this article appears verbatim to Kaulback's (1984) article for which there is no reference cited in the Pepper and Henry (1989) article.

This view of the visual learning preference indicates that the researchers have but examined one thread from a piece of fabric. Yet, the non-Native researchers continually restate this supposition, quoting from one another to substantiate their findings. This lack of a Native perspective may have

repeated misconceptions that feed upon themselves. This also causes problems for the Native researcher who is then left without references for a fact that has not yet been stumbled upon or had been misidentified by non-Native researchers.

Aside from the frustration and the silent rage that lurks within as the research literature spreads itself out in all its rhetoric, at times I am absolutely struck by the fact that several researchers seemed to have remembered that their subjects were human children.

It should not be so difficult to understand that if there is but one sparrow in the woods, it is leery and cautious, being careful not to chirp too loudly, if at all, until the chirps of other sparrows fill the forest announcing that all is well. Silence itself is a form of communication in an alien environment, and it is not 'culture shock'.

### Teaching Native Children

#### Silent Listening and Watching

Where does all this begin? In reference to the subarctic Algonquian people, Larose (1991) states, "During the first year of life, the child spent most of his or her time tightly wrapped in the cradle board, consequently limiting her or his motor behaviours. Yet children were generally set in a place where they would

be close to people... In such a situation, the child received a high level of visual and auditory stimulation. The child had no opportunity to escape from these stimuli" (p. 83). It follows then, that when the cradle board or the tikinagan is laid down, the child's view would be cut off from the visual stimulation. Philips (1983) also reports "babies on cradleboards are propped up vertically so that they can see what is going on. To facilitate sleep, the board is laid flat and often covered even when the baby is wide awake. In this way, visual stimulation is completely cut off, while auditory stimulation is not, suggesting an orientation to the visual as the channel more compelling of attention" (p. 63).

Foreman (1991) refers to a West Coast Native grandmother telling her grandson "You have two eyes, two ears, and a mouth and you use them in that order. When you've understood what you've seen, when you've understood what you've heard, then you may speak, but not before. You don't change the order" (p. 78).

This statement though perhaps not said in those exact words, is one of the first lessons learned in the traditional Native setting of northwestern Ontario. In the Ojibwa culture, the words for the young would be, "watch, listen and think so that when you have understood, then you may teach the others". It must

also be understood that words and actions are governed by cultural codes and this statement taken in different contexts would also change the meaning. Philips (1972) reports that the Native children are usually present in adult gatherings where they sit silently listening for long periods of time, and as she states, "there are many adult conversations to which children pay a great deal of silent, patient attention... There is some evidence that this silent listening and watching was... traditionally the first step in learning skills of a fairly complex nature" (p. 386).

#### Non-interference

Turning now to the value of non-interference, Foreman (1991) says that "Direct didactic instruction is a technique not culturally appropriate in the Native learning environment" (p. 78). This is also mentioned by Pepper & Henry (1986) in which they state, "Telling someone what to do" is in direct conflict with the value of personal autonomy" (p. 56). For this reason, direct questioning is seen as inappropriate, impolite, and intrusive, since it interferes with the students' personal autonomy.

Philips (1972) observes that there is usually no obvious leader or one person directing the activities of others in community functions and therefore attention must be given to how activities are organized

in the school. Based on her research in the Warm Springs Reservation located in central Oregon, Philips (1972) states,

If the games involve a role distinction between leader and followers in which the leader must tell the others what to do...Indian children show a great deal of reluctance to assume the leadership role... This is particularly true when the child is appointed leader by the teacher and must be repeatedly urged to act in telling the others what to do before doing so" (p. 379).

In this example, individual autonomy and non-interference is violated and this affects the image of the teacher in the classroom as well, where she/he is in total control, determining what will happen and when, who will do the speaking, when and for how long (Philips, 1972). By taking on this role of superiority, the teacher in effect "structurally separates herself from the rest of the participants, her students...one is either a part of the group or outside it... This helps to explain why Indian students show so little interest in initiating interaction with the teacher in activities involving other students... frequent indifference to the directions, orders, and requests for compliance with classroom social roles

that the teacher issues" (Philips, 1972, p. 391).

Native culture dictates social conformity to ensure individual equality. In the classroom context, this can pose difficulties for Native students. Researchers state that when a student was called upon by the teacher "they faced the dilemma of being seen as a show-off if they performed adequately; or, if they made a mistake, being subjected to peer ridicule and student teasing" (Greenbaum & Greenbaum, 1983, p. 22). As memory serves to remind us all too well of this, Philips (1972) also states that "'learning through public mistakes' is not one the Indians share, and this has important implications for our understanding of Indian behaviour in the classroom" (p. 381).

It is also noted by Philips (1972) that teachers have stated repeatedly that Native children are reluctant to talk in class and that this problem progressively increases as they get older, especially if they were ordered to speak by the teacher. Even in small groups where the teacher has asked individual students in that group to respond in verbal performance, Native students "much more frequently refuse, or fail to utter a word when called upon... When the Indian children do speak, they speak very softly, often in tones inaudible to a person more than a few feet away, and in utterances typically shorter or



briefers than those of their non-Indian counterparts" (Philips, 1972, p. 378).

Remember the sparrow in the woods.

### Native classroom

Small group work is seen as an effective method for engaging Native students in school work where there is no individual performance required and there is no leader appointed. In this setting, "Indian students become most fully involved in what they are doing, concentrating completely on their work until it is completed, talking a great deal to one another within the group" (Philips, 1972, p. 379). Just a point of interest here, in this research, the researcher observed that the "Non-Indian students take more time in 'getting organized,' disagree and argue more regarding how to go about a task, rely more heavily on appointed chairmen for arbitration and decision-making..." (Philips, 1972, p. 379), all of which is totally irrelevant to a Native child.

Finding identity with peers becomes very important in an alien setting and Philips (1972) reports that "the Indian students consistently show a great deal more interest in what their fellow students are doing than in what the teacher is doing" (p. 376). After all, there can be no respect for someone who has no respect for anyone else.

Philips, continues that the Native students are "more interested in maintaining and developing relationships with their peers, regardless of what is going on in the classroom" (p. 376).

Having established the concept of a Native classroom community, a distinction can then be made between intentional silence in the classroom and non-verbal communication, which are not the same thing.

In the context of a classroom of Native students, the non-verbal communication that happens is one where no words are required yet the message is received and understood by the others. Intentional silence in the classroom is one in which, as Dumont & Wax (1969) explain "...cultural differences...and the basic social separateness and the lack of communication, ensure that conflicts will develop and become more intensive as the students mature..." (p. 222). Once the tension takes hold, it can escalate to the extreme and the students' reaction to this is usually silence since the culture prohibits open confrontations. These will be explored in the next two sections.

### The Use of Silence

#### Positive silence

One form of silence can be understood as a 'word redundancy' element. An example of this would be,

visiting in comfortable silence or silence that allows for individual reflection between people, allowing thoughts to wander in comfortable company. This would be positive or non-threatening silence.

### Negative Silence

Negative silence is hostility. Since group harmony and non-interference is vital to the welfare of the community, one is not permitted to retaliate in a verbal or physical manner so the one reaction of defense is usually the adoption of negative silence.

The intentional or negative silence to be discussed here is one imposed on the non-Native teacher by Native students. This may also be understood as being given the 'silent treatment'. This silent treatment against the teacher may be the students' display of disapproval or chastisement of the teacher for a perceived slight or a reaction to an outright insult according to the social rules of governance in the community. Because the classroom acts as a reinforcing element for the group, once this group action starts it is very difficult to break since the group is acting as one, and no one person can be or wants to be the first to change the course of things. This would involve breaking the rule of group uniformity and conformity.

Greenbaum & Greenbaum (1983) mention that in

studies conducted in Sioux and Cherokee classrooms, researchers reported "older elementary children as typically very quiet, to the point of being [nonresponsive]" (p. 21). Greenbaum and Greenbaum also state that among the Sioux, researchers described " an unfolding sequence of student behaviour leading to stone silent classrooms" (p. 21; Dumont, Jr. 1972). In this case, the battle of wills between the non-Native teacher and the Native students had deteriorated into a cold war. The Greenbaum & Greenbaum (1983) report is as follows:

Upon entering school and through the third grade, the students were reported as being interested and willing pupils, highly teacher-oriented, and spending a great deal of time attentively looking at the teacher. As they progressed from the fourth to the sixth grade, however, teacher/student relations developed in sharp contrast to the early grades. Students had begun to orient their attentions to peers rather than the teacher and were described as appearing shy, withdrawn, sullen, and dull... By the seventh and eighth grades, student silence was pervasive, particularly in large classes... this pattern of withdrawal into silence reflected the emerging dominance of

the classroom peer group, which they saw as pitted against the teacher, the school, and Anglo culture (p. 21).

Other researchers report that "what typically happens is that, by the seventh and eighth grades the students have surrounded themselves with a wall of silence impenetrable by the outsider, while sheltering a rich emotional communication among themselves" (Dumont & Wax, 1969, p.222; Dumont, 1972).

In the Ojibwa society, if a child commits a serious social misconduct, he/she is generally chastised by being given the 'silent or invisible person' treatment. In another study mentioned by Greenbaum & Greenbaum (1983) Cherokees and Sioux students are reported to use silence intentionally to an effort to change the teacher's behaviour. It has also been observed that "by their silence they exercise control over the teacher and manoeuvre him toward a mode of participation that meets their standards" (Dumont & Wax, 1969, p. 222). A study of Inuit students also revealed that they use a similar method of silence (Greenbaum & Greenbaum, 1983). Other studies indicate that once this "pattern of silence and withdrawal" is established, it tends to "persist through high school and college" (Greenbaum & Greenbaum, 1983, p. 22).

Greenbaum & Greenbaum (1983) list some studies conducted in many Native communities one of which was in a Canadian Indian boarding school, where "attempts to narrow the conversation to one speaker...were met with student silence and embarrassment" (p. 22). In Minnesota and Ontario, questions directed at Ojibwa students both in and outside the classroom "were often met with complete silence" (p. 22). The Mississippi Choctaw also displayed the same behaviour. A comment by Dumont & Wax (1969) may summarize this use of silence in which they state that it "is their technique for protecting themselves in order to endure the alien intrusiveness of the teacher and the discourtesy and barbarity of the school" (p. 223). It has also been said that "Intentional withdrawal suggests boundary maintenance, while a lack of intention would indicate interference" (Greenbaum & Greenbaum, 1983, p. 29). Like poured cement, silence once begun, hardens with time. Dumont (1972) states, "Lastly, silence can be the final resolution to the cultural differences. As such, it is as total a breakdown of education as can take place without the school's closing" (p. 349).

#### Nonverbal Behaviour and Communication

##### Definition

There are many differing perspectives and theories on the topic of non-verbal behaviour or communication.

These will be narrowed down to focus on the cultural implications as evidenced in the Native classroom and to determine in which areas the nonverbal communication surfaces during classroom interaction.

Greenbaum and Greenbaum (1983) offer a definition that "Nonverbal communication has been characterized as a silent or invisible language (Hall, 1959; Philips, 1983)" (p. 18). LaFrance & Mayo (1978) state that "In silence as well as in speech, we are constantly communicating with one another...we are a perpetual process of communication" (p. 2). They go on to say that "Communication does not stop when words do. Human communication is more than speech or sound" (p. 2). In sum, "There is no silence in nonverbal communication" (LaFrance & Mayo, 1978, p. 16).

Some researchers on this topic have generally viewed nonverbal behaviour as a component of nonverbal communication; LaFrance & Mayo, 1978; Rosenthal, Hall, DiMatteo, Rogers, & Archer, 1979; Woolfolk & Galloway, 1985; and Feldman, 1985, to name a few. Argle (1972) offers this explanation "Much of the current work on non-verbal communication in man is concerned with establishing that the behaviour of one individual is affected by the non-verbal behaviour of others, and with describing and classifying the signals and effects involved" (p. 268).

For the purposes of this study, nonverbal communication will refer to the intuitive form of communication, and the nonverbal behaviour will refer to that which is apparent to the eye.

### Nonverbal Behaviour

Mehrabian (1972) offers this definition for nonverbal behaviour: "[It] refers to actions as distinct from speech. It thus includes facial expressions, hand and arm gestures, postures, positions, and various movements of the body or the legs and feet...it also includes subtle aspects of speech...paralinguistic or vocal phenomena, such as fundamental frequency range and intensity range, speech errors or pauses, speech rate, and speech duration..." (p. 1). The interpretations of these have their limitations in that they "become interpretable only when you know what is going on around them and that, if you change the context, the meaning of the behaviour changes, too" (LaFrance & Mayo, 1978, p. 11).

In the interpretation and reporting of the data in this study, these forms of communication may appear in the course of a conversation and will be interpreted as such, but it is not so much the nonverbal behaviour that constitutes much of the Native communication but that of the nonverbal intuitive form of communication.

Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1974) states that "Birdwhistell



(1963, 1967) has advanced the hypothesis that no expressive movement has a universal meaning and that all movements are a product of culture and not biologically inherited or inborn" (p. 20). When the conversants are from the same culture, the first few seconds of the initial meeting gives clear indication whether or not the nonverbal communication is also received and interpreted correctly. LaFrance & Mayo (1978) report that "When two people share the same culture, they share communication systems as well. They speak the same language, verbal and nonverbal, and in more or less the same way" (p. 173).

#### Nonverbal Communication as Intuitive Knowledge

The nonverbal communication is quickly detected between individuals with highly attuned awareness of this and it 'feels right' or 'it fits' within the spoken words and it may 'lead' the flow of conversation simply by the speakers picking up cues. Rosenthal, Hall, DeMatteo, Rogers, Archer, (1979) state that it may be a 'feeling' or perhaps 'something' about the person that we are picking up and that,

we are intuitively aware that we perceive (often accurately) an enormous number of nonverbal messages. This "tacit knowledge" ...of being able to use nonverbal cues that we cannot describe was what the anthropologist

Edward Sapir had in mind when he said that people could understand gestures because of "an elaborate and secret code that is written nowhere, known by none, and understood by all (p. 1).

It is this 'tacit knowledge' or 'intuitive knowledge' which forms the bulk of the nonverbal communication between Native people and with Native children in particular. Since the children are still sharpening their watching and listening modes of communication, they may be more highly perceptive of the nonverbal, where voiced attitudes and feelings are not required. Cultural interpersonal relationships also play a significant role in this type of communication since "... language cannot be separated from communication, or communication from culture" (Darnell & Foster, 1988, p. 70). In the context of a Native community, this can be understood to mean that the embedded cultural governance of a community demands a heightened intuitive awareness of the nonverbal communication and nonverbal behaviour and its interpretation among its members to ensure proper manoeuvre through the First Nation's complex rules and etiquette.

#### Misinterpretation in the Classroom

This dimension is noted by Rosenthal, et. al. (1979) in which they state "Different types of

nonverbal communication are so embedded in our daily lives that we use the nonverbal messages without being aware of them" (p. 1). "Because of the out-of-awareness nature of nonverbal communication...the potential for unrecognized communicational misunderstanding is far greater" (LaFrance & Mayo, 1978, (p. 173). This indicates that communication between people of different cultures would likely result in "interference between two patterns, or a perceived absence of patterning, during an encounter" (Watson, 1970, p. 60). Argyle (1972) also speaks of this in which he states "...there are considerable cultural variations in many aspects of NVC [nonverbal communication], and the same signal can have different meanings depending on the culture and the situation" (p. 267). A situation of this sort is continually reported in research conducted in a classroom of Native students and their non-Native teachers. If a misunderstanding can occur on a more visual level of basic value differences as described in Greenbaum & Greenbaum (1983) in which they found that "Indian students are often described as shy by non-Indian teachers, who in turn are frequently considered to be mean and bossy by the students" (p. 29). Another study was done where Choctaw and non-Native high school students were asked to rate the actions of a "football

coach bawling out his players" (p. 29). Ninety-three percent of the Native students viewed the coach's action as negative and they would not like such a person, and ninety-three percent of the non-Native students rated the same behaviour as positive and appropriate and that they would like such a person" (p. 29). This was to indicate that the "Native values emphasized the inappropriateness of showing off and acting bossy..." (Greenbaum & Greenbaum, 1983, p. 25). Then, what is the resulting environment if the misunderstanding of the nonverbal communication takes place in the classroom?

We have now moved from the intentional 'silent treatment' in the classroom into the unconscious coalescence of intuitive communication. In Woolfolk & Galloway's (1985) research, they report that "Signals of intimacy or distance as well as rapport or withdrawal can be seen in the flick of an eye or a behavioral turn of recognition" (p. 82). All the nonverbal behaviour and communication that takes place within the classroom can set the direction of interactive or distant context. Woolfolk & Galloway (1985) continue, "Let a single message or cluster of cues go awry and context can change. Each message and meaning is nested within other levels of contextual information...Whether these messages cohere to provide

stable contexts for students' learning or compete to leave students confused is an issue the teacher faces every day in every school lesson for every student" (p. 82).

Greenbaum & Greenbaum (1983) state that "Unlike differences in spoken language, two different nonverbal systems can be in use without either interactant being explicitly aware of it" (p. 18). Being a Native person, I have on occasion walked away from a conversation (in the English language with a person from another culture) feeling that something was very wrong with that conversation. Upon reflection, the conversation was polite and informative but the 'vibes' or non-verbal signals picked up were unconsciously interpreted and consequently emitted a negative feeling. Whether the message was correctly received, only the other party would confirm this if it was done with conscious intent. This would be an interesting research topic if it were possible to conduct.

LaFrance & Mayo (1978) state that "The degree to which interactants violate or move beyond the expected baselines tells you not only about the existence of the baselines but also about the person doing the violating. Such 'out-of-bounds' behaviour focuses attention on the individual and probably has some effect on the partner's opinion of the violator"

(p. 193). In the Native classroom context, the students would be engaged in internalizing these intuitive feelings and reactions. As Mehrabian (1972) states "Usually, an idea or feeling is made explicit with words, and remains implicit when the speaker refrains from talking, or when he says the words in a voice that conveys a subtle, or even contradictory, shade of meaning. The explicit-implicit dichotomy also reminds us of the idea that the coding rules for verbal-linguistic phenomena are explicit and that the coding rules for subtle communication phenomena are implicit" (p. 2).

### Contradictions

It is the implied meaning and the contradictory signals that one receives which are focused here. LaFrance & Mayo (1978), cite a story about the teacher who came into her class all excited about how happy she was to be the teacher of that class, until one of the students stood up and said "If you're so happy to be here, why don't you tell your face?" (p. 91). Usually, social politeness would prevent us from calling attention to these contradictions, but research in this area measured honesty content in the negative nonverbal to far outweigh the positive verbal messages. In this sense, honesty would be the best policy since any attempt at denying a contradiction would discredit the

person further. LaFrance & Mayo (1978) cite a study by Mehrabian & Ferris, 1967, which found that, "when there was contradiction between facial expression and verbal message, the facial expression predominated over the words to determine the impression formed" (p. 92).

Greenbaum & Greenbaum (1983) report three differences in the conversation regulation between Native and non-Native people and these are; a) the talk/silence sequencing of conversation, these are the pauses between words and the length of speech; b) voice loudness of speaker, and c) gaze, or visual focus. Based on these, they have found that there are four ways in which communication problems can occur; a) a weak "signal to noise" ratio, where meanings are garbled by unfamiliar components; b) if the nonverbal cues are not the same between the speakers, misinterpretation or misattribution occurs. The two examples given here are the Native child's averted eyes of respect being interpreted as sullenness or evasiveness by the teacher, and the non-Native teacher's loud voice interpreted as being mean by the Native students because it is louder than is normal in Native conversation; c) basic value conflicts, which includes Native preference to group versus individual competitiveness, consensus versus individual authority in decision making, conflict avoidance versus direct

confrontation, quiet observation versus verbal trial and error, and avoidance of individual public performances; and d) convergent accommodation difficulties which involve the mismatch of nonverbal regulators. According to this research "increased response matching is associated with increased positive affect, providing conversants with a sense of being "tuned-in" or "in-sync" (p. 20).

To sum up this particular section of the review and refocus on Native students, Dumont & Wax (1969) in describing a classroom of Cherokee students, state that "A gesture, an inflection in voice, a movement of the eye is as meaningful as a large volume of words would be for their white peers" (p. 222).

#### Cultural Transmission in the Classroom

##### Definition

Singleton, (1974) puts forth a definition to cultural transmission as follows: "From an anthropological point of view, education is cultural transmission. Culture itself is often defined in essentially educational terms as "the shared products of human learning" (p. 28). This broad educational definition will serve to avoid being drawn into the vortex of the cultural transmission and cultural acquisition theories. An example of this is the view taken by Wolcott (1991), which states that "it may be



more helpful to regard cultural transmission and culture acquisition as tangentially related rather than as complementary" (p. 255).

#### Transmission of Culture

In a classroom context of Native students and a non-Native teacher, several problems are cited in the studies. Philips (1972) says that teachers cannot assume that if Native children master the English language, they have "also assimilated all of the sociolinguistic rules underlying interaction in classrooms and other non-Indian social situations where English is spoken" (p. 392). Since acquiring a second language is not only a matter of memorizing and learning words, it also includes the putting together of words into proper sequences and sorting out value laden communication into proper context (Fox, 1973; Emerson, 1987; Hall, 1976). Rivers and Temperley (1978) state that the social-cultural meaning is the hardest to grasp. This is the meaning that "...springs from shared experiences, values, and attitudes...when students interpret an English text according to their own cultural experiences, distortions and misapprehensions result" (p. 202).

This then adds another dimension to the classroom atmosphere where the Native students speak a Native language as their first language. In the instruction

of English as a second language to Native students, Mitchell (1984) points out, "while the word "language" implies much more than just words and structures, the word "behaviour" reminds us directly of the need to teach appropriate facial expressions, gestures, physical distances, response times, patterns of emphasis, emotional expression, and so on, along with the more obvious components of language. Unless all these behaviours "match" the English utterances, the speaker will not be well understood" (p. 42).

This process demands that the Native students acquire another parallel set of rules of behaviour for the English, or face the threat of the English supplanting the Native spoken language and the nonverbal. This is the vise where the student is caught and the struggle begins in keeping the first language communication intact, identity, and self-esteem, for one is inevitably linked to the other.

Auerback and Burgess (1987) state that "...no curriculum is neutral: Each reflects a particular view of the social order, whether implicitly or explicitly. This "hidden curriculum" generates social meanings, restraints, cultural values that shape students' roles outside the classroom" (p. 150). These foreign values thrust upon the Native child, from the non-Native teacher, through the text books, and the implicit

values elicited by the workbooks, creates an internal conflict within the child. The child cannot explain the source, perceiving only the very heavy, ugly, 'I don't like it' feeling. The Native teacher would thus be more sensitive to the culture, its values and beliefs so that any conflicting concepts broached would be immediately identified and made appropriate so as not to challenge or demean the integrity of the students in which this culture is embedded.'

Singleton, (1974) sees cultural transmission as "both the transmission of tradition from one generation to the next and the transmission of new knowledge or cultural patterns from anybody who "knows" to anyone who does not...Robert Redfield spoke of education as "the process of cultural transmission and renewal" (p. 28). Seen in this light, Native teachers not only function as classroom teachers first, but also as older brothers, sisters, uncles, or aunts, for the students. When Native teachers are from the community where they are teaching, they assume multi-level roles as will be discussed in the research review.

The Spindlers (1991) make an important observation when they state "But cultural transmission is by no means always 'calculated.' Most of the time adults or older peers are not 'calculating'; they are just being themselves. And by being themselves, they are

transmitting signals (or at least displaying them), cues, and understandings; in effect, they are modeling, albeit unconsciously, their culture, however personal or collective it may be" (p. 276).

This becomes a very important factor in the classroom of Native students and their Native teacher. By the fact that their teacher is Native, speaks volumes of meaning for the students in terms of their acceptability, belonging, ownership, pride in their education, and most importantly, hope for their future aspirations.

#### Native Teachers in the Classroom

In the past sections of this literature review, the door has been opened into classrooms of non-Native teachers of Native children and the back door of the class has been opened in order to observe the Native children more closely. This brief section will peruse some research literature with reference to Native teachers.

Barnhardt, (1974) reported in reference to the Alaska Rural Teacher Training Corps, "We have learned that it is difficult to be a native and a teacher, too. Many aspects of the two positions are incompatible and the demands of the role are enormous" (p.18). A struggle remains in the attempt to deal with the conflicting value systems between the community, the

students, and the Native teachers on one hand, and the school curriculum, text books and work books on the other. Reyhner (1981), in a note of optimism states that "Once Indian teachers are able to incorporate the best of tribal and non-Indian values in their schools, they can change in a matter of years what otherwise might either take a matter of centuries or never take place at all" (p. 21).

#### Native and Non-Native Teachers

Foreman, (1991) found that "Native teachers appear to utilize a sense of timing that is culturally based, sensitive to the energies of the learners, and which facilitates easy transitions between learning activities" (p. 79). In comparing the classrooms of a non-Native teacher and a Native teacher of Native students, Greenbaum & Greenbaum (1983) report a study conducted by Erickson and Mohatt, 1982, where an Odawa and one non-Native teacher were observed in the classroom. The "Indian teacher has a slower classroom tempo, as indicated by longer pauses for student responses...events generally happened more slowly in the Indian teacher's classroom...the non-Indian teacher clearly distinguished periods of free time for students, whereas the Indian teacher made no such formal provision" (p. 26). The non-Native teacher also exerted overt social control over the students where

the Native teacher "made fewer individually-focused requests or directives and did not assiduously monitor student behaviour" (p. 26). Erickson and Mohatt (1982) state that,

one has the impression of slowness and smoothness as classroom events unfold. The sense of pacing--of doing the right things at the right time--has been noted by Smith and Geoffrey (1968) and by Kounin (1970) as the key feature of successful teaching performance. We will argue that a shared sense of pacing between teacher and students (part of their mutually congruent interactional competence--their shared culture as it is defined by Goodenough) is manifested behaviorally in an interactional smoothness whose presence or absence is empirically observable. This observable smoothness...can be taken as an indicator of shared expectations and interpretive strategies on the part of the participants in the interactional scene" (p. 145).

Philips (1983) also reports that "It has been suggested for example, that Indian teachers will be less likely to misinterpret Indian Children, because of the cultural background shared by teacher and student. And Indian children are thought to be more likely to identify with, pay attention to, and establish rapport

with teachers that are more like themselves" (p. 130).

Philips (1983) also notes an argument that having a Native teacher teaching Native children will not necessarily create a better learning environment than a non-Native teacher would have. This thought stems from the fact that some people may feel that a Native teacher who has been totally acculturated and assimilated to the 'Anglo' world would have nothing left in common with Native children. The fact remains that no amount of justification from research findings will illuminate the fact that no amount of sensitizing Anglo teachers will equal one who has the experience of being a Native person. Philips goes on to present the findings that support the hiring of Native teachers for Native schools. Philips (1983) concludes on this topic, "Thus it is likely that Indian children will continue to convey attention in culturally distinctive ways for some time to come, and will continue to benefit from the presence of Indian teachers in the classroom who themselves listen in a similar manner and interpret their behaviour as it would be interpreted in their homes" (p. 132).

For whatever our teachers' attempts at teaching us during our formative years, Reyhner, (1981) states, "If the Indian child experiences the school as something foreign...then he is defensive and apprehensive from

the start. If at least some of the teachers are Indian and he sees them socially outside of school dealing as equals with his parents, then the school is less alien. If the curriculum of the school includes some Indian literature and history, the school is even less foreign" (p. 21). It is therefore, not only what is being taught that is important, but also how, and who is doing the teaching.

#### Native Teachers

Cazden, John, & Hymes, (1972) note that "a child's ability to learn from a teacher depends on the sharing of systems of nonverbal codification. Without this the child cannot be certain he is following the subtle interconnections in any presentation, he cannot account for certain behaviours such as particular tones of voice, and he cannot feel secure in what he has learned or what the significance of the learning is" (p. 27). In the silence of the classroom, the Native teacher and the Native students will gauge this silence as a means of 'check and balance' which will alert either if something needs correcting (Dumont, 1972). Although Dumont is referring to a non-Native teacher, it can be more so the case for a Native teacher in the statement, "In this case both teacher and students know what it [the silence] means" (Dumont, 1972, p. 349).

Reyhner (1981) talks of an elementary school in a



reservation in Montana, where half the teaching staff is Native, and he states "they are producing a curriculum and a teaching style that meets their own needs and thus they are more effective as the community can identify and relate to them" (p. 21). In a study by Lipka (1990) about an exemplary lesson by a Yup'ik Eskimo teacher in southwest Alaska, he states that "...when the social interactional context of the classroom is adapted in a fashion to accommodate the social discourse and social relations of the students in a way more congruent with the natal culture, then there appear to be significant differences in the classroom behaviour of ethnic minority and indigenous students" (p. 20). Based on comprehensive research, Lipka (1990) notes that "There is evidence that the indigenous students of indigenous teachers, even at lower-levels of academic preparation, have outperformed their mainstream counterparts" (p. 20). Here is an example of how a 'culturally-based classroom environment' functions where the teacher has "been able to successfully integrate Yup'ik cultural values, with western knowledge while reinforcing and building upon the childrens' existing Yup'ik identity" (Lipka, 1990, p. 19). In his concluding statement, Lipka, (1990), says "...contextualizing the classroom, through discourse style, social organization, choice of

content, distribution of student rights, and authenticity of the teaching act enables learning "both ways", Yup'ik and western without apparent conflict or ambivalence" (p. 30).

There have been many changes in the last decade to suggest a positive outcome in the education of Native youth. Of these changes, a thought was expressed that "while the advocate of worldview change may come from outside the culture...the innovator, the person who actually effects the recommended change...is always an insider" (Reyhner, 1981, p. 21).

#### Practical Knowledge

Going on the assumption that Native teachers hold a special knowledge and competency acquired from their experiences as members of a Native community and their learning experiences as students in the education system, they would be better suited to teach Native children than non-Native teachers, because of their unique form of contextual knowledge. Thus began the search for an appropriate term for this knowledge. The literature on 'practical knowledge' came close to the idea addressed here.

#### Research on Practical Knowledge

Irwin (1989) posits that "practical knowledge is constructed upon rules of practice, practical principles, and images" (p. 21). In this sense, the

Native teachers' practical knowledge would be reflected in practice. Irwin (1989) goes on to say "Practical knowledge is thus constituted according to the knower and the context in which the knower lives" (p. 24). So, the practical knowledge applied by Native teachers in the classroom would reflect the demands of the students, the situation, and the environment.

Aside from knowledge of curriculum and content, Elbaz (1981) states that there are three other aspects to this knowledge,

There was a "practical" aspect to the teacher's knowledge, ie., that teachers have knowledge, derived from practice, of instructional routines, classroom management, student needs, and the like. There was a "personal" aspect, i.e., teachers have self-knowledge and they work toward personally meaningful goals in their teaching. And finally there was an "interaction" aspect, which refers to the fact that teachers' knowledge is based on, and shaped by, a variety of interactions with others in their environment... (p.47).

Five orientations of practical knowledge were also identified: situational, theoretical, personal, social, and experiential (Elbaz, 1981).

The situational orientation reflects, in part,

the intuition of the early "practical" category: it is because teachers' knowledge is practical that it is directed toward making sense of, and responding to, the various situations of teaching. The personal orientation again reflects my original assumption that teachers use their knowledge to enable them to work in personally meaningful ways.

The social orientation is meant to encompass both the shaping of teachers' knowledge by social conditions and constraints, and the active role of their knowledge in structuring the social setting of teaching (p. 49).

The experiential orientation ...brought to light categories of experiencing (e.g., the time perspective and "form of spontaneity" which proved valuable in affording a sharpened view of how teachers' knowledge is related to experience... (p. 49).

The theoretical orientation was explained as the teacher of the study had certain views on her subject matter...when similar views appeared with respect to other areas of knowledge, it was found that these similarities could be explained in terms of a general orientation to theory which pervaded her knowledge and

conditioned its use (p. 49).

These five orientations will be referred to in the summary of the findings to determine if this format would fit the categories to emerge as the traditional practical knowledge of Native teachers.

#### Native Teachers' Practical Knowledge

Nelson-Barber (1990) refers to the Native teachers' practical knowledge as "often 'what works' in their classrooms has become 'second-nature' due to shared cultural identity or experience with students" (p. 34). Nelson-Barber (1990) also states that although these teachers "have highly specialized skill in tailoring content, in the use of local vernacular, or in building relationships with students...this kind of highly specialized practitioner knowledge is never summoned on a test, nor does it inform the curriculum in most teacher preparation institutions" (p.34).

#### Native Teacher Education

A question posed by Foreman (1991), asks whether the Native teacher education programs are training Native teachers to be "virtually identical to the majority of society, or are the programs truly providing Native Indians with the opportunities to maintain and develop components of their own culture--components that may differ significantly from those of the non-Indian cultures?" (p. 75).

The limited research on Native teachers indicates that in spite of the 'identical training' that a Native teacher may receive and the use of similar teaching materials and classroom settings as the non-Native teachers, the other aspects of Native cultural interaction still makes an impact on the Native children's learning experience. Studies have found that

subtle differences between native and non-native teachers in their relationships with native children appear to have a significant impact on the response of those children to formal learning... The differences are reflected largely in non-verbal behaviour and derive primarily from differences in prior experience and particular attitudes and values" (Barnhardt, 1974, p. 15).

### Research and Literature

The assumption mentioned earlier in the Native learning styles research context also exists in the literature on Native educational issues in that the material is directed primarily at non-Native teachers.

Almost all of the literature normally used to help prepare teachers for work with cultural minorities assumes that the teacher will be from outside the culture. From the native

students' point of view, the literature is "culturally deprived." While such issues as "familiarity with the cultural background of the children," or "ability to communicate effectively," are major issues in the "outsider" context, they become secondary to the native teacher. In most of the literature, the natives usually find themselves as the objects of study (Barnhardt, 1974, p. 18).

In referring to the small number of culturally influenced notions about good teaching in research literature, Nelson-Barber (1990) states that "the vast store of knowledge remains unrecorded and unformalized ...Delpit (1986, 1988) argues that the perspectives of minority teachers in particular have been virtually ignored in academic dialogue about what constitutes effective pedagogical practice..." (p. 34).

There is obviously a great need for this knowledge to be identified, articulated, recorded, and its existence acknowledged for the benefit of all educators.

This thesis attempts to answer the questions of how Native values and practices may be reflected in the student and teacher interactions in a Native classroom and what the traditional practical knowledge actually is and how it is used by Native teachers in the

classroom. This process also offers a glimpse from the insider's view of the Native teacher's perspective.



CHAPTER 3  
DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Introduction to the Research

This chapter describes the methods used in this study. The characteristics of qualitative research in the naturalistic perspective is discussed. Field research using non-participant observation is clarified and the use of open-ended interviews, solicited journals, and formal and informal field notes to form the triangulation of data to demonstrate validity is described.

Theoretical Foundations

The theoretical perspectives of qualitative research involves phenomenology, symbolic interactionism, and ethnography.

To researchers, phenomenology is the attempt to try to understand people, and understand why, how, and what meaning the subjects attribute to their particular daily actions and interactions. "Phenomenological inquiry begins with silence" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 31).

Symbolic interactionists view human experience as that which we interpret it to be. "Objects, people, situations, and events do not possess their own meaning; rather, meaning is conferred on them" (Bogdan

& Biklen, 1982, p. 33). Meaning is constructed through the interpretation of an action by people who share common experiences and background. Thus, people in a specific situation develop common definitions, and in the symbolic interactionist language, people "share perspectives" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 33).

Ethnography attempts to describe culture or certain aspects of the culture of a people. Thus, the "ethnographer's goals are to share in the meanings that the cultural participants take for granted and then to depict the new understanding for the reader and for outsiders" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 36).

In this sense, the research begins by seeing, listening, and then attempting to understand from the insider's view, the observed, the understood, and finally the telling of the knowledge.

#### Overview of the Research

The qualitative model of research was developed originally by sociologists and anthropologists.

Qualitative research is an umbrella term used to describe research which is subjective, relying upon the researcher's "skills of observation and interpretation to provide valid information" (Borg & Gall, 1989, p. 379). The methods used in qualitative research involve, observation, interviewing, recording, describing, interpreting, and appraising objects and

situations intact in their natural environment (Eisner, 1991).

In educational qualitative research, the term frequently employed is 'naturalistic research' to denote the fact that the subjects are studied in their "natural state, undisturbed by the researcher" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983, p. 6).

The ethnographic perspective originated from anthropologists and is also referred to as the anthropological field study approach (Borg & Gall, 1989).

#### Characteristics of the Research

Anthropologists and sociologists use the term 'field research'. This denotes the fact that the research data is collected at the field study site and not in a laboratory setting (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). Field research is therefore the major characteristic of qualitative research. Wilcox (1982) states that "One begins fieldwork not with a tabula rasa but with a foreshadowed problem in mind" (p. 459). The foreshadowed problem for this research was mentioned in my 'Personal Ground'.

There are six features of a qualitative study and they are; field focused, in that research is carried out in the natural setting; the researcher acts as primary instrument; the interpretation provides meaning

for 'why' through detailed description; language is expressive, the 'voice in text'; attention to particulars to arrive at general statements; its coherence, insight, and instrumental utility is used to persuade by reasonable judgement (Eisner, 1991).

In the naturalistic perspective, ten characteristics of qualitative research methodology are incorporated and they are; field research in the natural setting; the researcher is data collector and observer; qualitative methods of data collection are used; subjects are purposely selected for observation; inductive data analysis is used; grounded theory is developed; emergent theory develops; subject is involved in study; uses intuitive knowledge; and focuses on social meanings and interpretations (Borg & Gall, 1989, p. 385-387). To give voice to subjects in the study, the 'insider's view' is presented as it is perceived and understood by the participants. In this process, researchers use participant or nonparticipant observation methods in the effort to make the 'familiar strange' or to acknowledge the 'out-of-awareness' elements of action and interaction. During the observation, specific insights begin to emerge which the researcher focuses on. Hypotheses can then be developed in the attempt to understand and explain the observed phenomenon. This is referred to as "grounded

theory" (Borg & Gall, 1989, P. 389). The use of ethnographic techniques allows for holistic research in that it looks at the situation in context to its relationship to the whole and it utilizes a variety of data sources to establish the triangulation (Borg & Gall, 1989; Wilcox, 1982; Goetz & LeCompte, 1984).

### Description of the Research

#### Background

I initially started to investigate two isolated communities, Community A and Community B, where the participants were generally the same in terms of number, grades taught, years of experience, and educational background. The larger of the two communities, Community A, cancelled at the last minute due to unforeseen circumstances at the school. This left me with Community B where plans and arrangements were still on schedule and it was impossible at that point in time for me to find another community in the area in which to conduct the study.

#### Gaining Entry

In Community A, initial communication between myself and the school principal took place on March 6, 1992, followed by phone calls to the School Board, and letters to the Chief and Band Council stating my interest to visit the community for the purpose of conducting the study which was fully explained in the

letter. I met briefly with the principal, vice-principal and the Director of the School Board, and all supported my proposal and indicated their agreement.

I contacted the school principal in Community B and after initial introductions and discussion with the principal, and the Chair of the School Board, permission was tentatively granted from both provided that the Trustees of the School Board, the Chief, and Band Council were also agreeable to the proposal. After a conversation with a Band Councillor, I forwarded a letter to the Chief and Band Council requesting permission to enter the community for the purpose of conducting the study at the school. I followed this with a letter to everyone concerned restating the purpose for my visit. Shortly thereafter, a call came from the Band Councillor of Community B stating that on behalf of the School Board, Chief and Council, that I was welcome to the community to conduct my study.

The unfortunate circumstances mentioned earlier involved the loss of the teacher's cabin where I had hoped to stay in Community B, which had burnt to the ground. Then I received a call from the principal in Community A, stating that the agreement was cancelled. A short time later, I was informed that the school had burnt down at Community B. As can be appreciated, this

turn of events seemed to end any possibility of conducting the study at this community. After conferring with my advisor, I was assured that what had developed in Community B, may have some strong possibilities for a unique study. After assurances from the principal and the School Board at Community B, that classes were still in session in the homes of the teachers, the greater opportunity emerged for a closer look at the teachers' interactions with the students in the smaller, enclosed locations which allowed for almost a one to one contact between the teachers and students. The classes had been divided to accommodate the smaller rooms where half the class attended in the morning and the other half in the afternoon.

Shortly thereafter, I received a call from the principal of Community B confirming permission for me to conduct research in the classrooms. Arranging a time for the visit to Community B, became the next priority. A date was suggested and agreed upon but since the ice was just melting on the lake, the bushplane airline would not risk a landing at that time, because of floating ice. So, the date was changed to a week later. The melting ice on the lake had also raised the water level so high that there was some difficulty in locating the bushplane at the flight connection site, but eventually made it to the

community.

Upon arrival, I was rather surprised to learn, that during all the commotion and chaos of keeping the classes going in their new settings, the principal had not had the opportunity to inform the teachers of the purpose of my visit. But, the teachers in their mercy took this in stride and agreed to proceed with my purpose. I was further restricted in time by a school trip that had been arranged for the students to go to Toronto. So, amid the classes, marking papers, and planning for the next day, the teachers were involved in fund raising for the Toronto trip which was scheduled for the third week in June. This left me with barely two weeks. One of these days was shortened to accommodate the community spring clean-up and preparation for the Toronto trip. The evenings and the weekends were spent transcribing and analyzing observation notes, documents, and reflective comments. Several days after I left, Community B was evacuated due to a forest fire which swept through, miraculously around the perimeter of the community.

A note must be made here that the rather informal process probably had to do with the fact that I was recognized as a published author, and that through patrilineal lines, I was most likely related to most of the people in the community. I did not however, make



any effort to discover 'relatives' since I was clearly there only for research purposes and remained so for the duration of my stay in the community.

This was my first visit to the community and it was also my first meeting with the principal and the Native teachers involved in the study and I feel very indebted to them for their gracious response to my rather untraditional request to meddle and engage in a strictly non-Native activity among them. For this, I heartily beg their pardon.

#### The Setting

On June 1st, I stepped off the small two-seater cessna bushplane onto a dock that had separated from its anchor on the mainland. There were about eight pine logs thrown across to the dock some of which were floating loosely, leaving no doubt that a pair of black rubber boots were in order. As I was pulling the boots out of my bag, I noticed three women moving away from the store front. I carried my bags over the logs to the ground where I had to push a friendly dog's snout out of my bag while I shoved the boots back in. By this time, the women had arrived wanting to know where I was going and they helped me with my bags up the trail and over the hill to the school office where I met the principal and the Director of the School Board.

The community was established in 1976 with a

population now of about three hundred residents. All the buildings in the community are built entirely from logs. It is also apparent that the cabins were built by the people of the community since there is a striking absence of the typical northern Indian Reserve with its gravel roads for the nonexistent motor vehicles. The log cabins stand nestled in green grass, bush and poplar trees, all facing the lake.

There is a Band office, church, nursing station, postal service, local store, community hall, radio station, the high school building, and several others in the central area surrounded by the cabins of the community residents. There is a gas generator located just outside the community which supplies electricity to the community. Telephones are available to the community but there is no running water and the cabins are heated by woodstoves.

The school office houses one classroom and the administrative offices of the Principal and Director of the School Board. The charred remains of the school and the teacher's cabin are fronted by the other three cabins and one beside. Across the clearing is another cabin for the special education and kindergarten teacher. Off to the side at the edge of the bushes stands the school's four outhouses which I was informed is called 'Moo-town', for which imagination will

provide the translation thereof.

There are about one hundred students from kindergarten to grade ten. The grade ten class as mentioned earlier, is situated in the centre of the community. The provincial school and the teachers' homes are clustered on a point of land, separated by a field from the rest of the community.

There are four non-Native teachers and the other four teachers, the Principal, secretaries and other support staff are all Native people. I was housed with one of the non-Native teachers which I discovered to be a blessing, as noted in the 'Personal Reflections' of this study.

#### Researcher as Non-participant Observer

The participant observation method involves the active participation of the researcher in developing rapport and close interpersonal relationships with the subjects.

Upon entering the first classroom, I knew immediately that the participant observation method was not possible for me. Since I was thoroughly familiar with the cultural mores, I was immediately sensitized to the environment and this awareness warned me to behave accordingly. For me, this meant non-participant observation.

The non-participant method increases the

likelihood of the collection of accurate, focused, and complete recording of the insider's view. This involves an unobtrusive presence to allow for the recording of situations intact, and allows for a sharper focus on the observation (Borg & Gall, 1989). Goetz & LeCompte (1984) state that non-participant observation "requires observers to direct attention and concentration to a complete and accurate recording of observable data" (p. 145).

In the first few minutes of recording in the classroom, I realized that not only was I recording the observable but also taking in the non-verbal communication happening within the classroom. This required intense awareness and effort to interpret, translate, and record. Goetz & LeCompte (1984) also state that in the non-participant observation "Social exchange with participants in a scene thus becomes distracting and may lead to distortions in the record" (p. 145). Several times, the teacher asked me in turn, a question a student had asked him and I not only found it distracting but rather amusing that some students had forgotten that I was there. I recognized this however, as the teacher's effort to be polite and not ignore me altogether. I blended in to the environment and in a sense became part of the furniture. I wrote constantly, observing, hardly glancing at my notebook,

turning my head slightly away, averting my eyes when I became aware of a student studying me. That too went into my notes.

The non-verbal interpretations were cross-checked during the teacher interviews but here again, the difficulty is in the illumination of the out-of-awareness. Hall (1973) refers to this as 'informal awareness' of which he says is "paradoxical because it describes a situation in which much of what goes on exists almost entirely out-of-awareness. Nothing, however, is hidden in any sense of the word. In fact, it is doubtful if there is any part of culture which is really hidden once we know how to go about looking for the eloquent signs" (p. 73). In this way, I continuously observed, translated, transcribed, recorded, and reflected on my documentation of events, and translations, and collected various other documents for the duration of my stay in the community.

It must be noted that except for the classroom text instructions, most of the conversations and comments between the Native people both inside and outside the classroom were carried on in Ojibwa which necessitated not only the sentence translation in context into English, but also the meaning of the non-verbal intuitive communication which as stated earlier, is very much embedded within the meaning itself.

### Qualitative Data Collection and Ongoing Analysis

The qualitative data collection methods and analysis used in this study include formal and informal observation field notes, open-ended interviews, solicited journals, document collection, triangulation and ongoing data analysis.

On the subject of knowing why you, yourself, do certain things and then extending this by interpreting the meaning of those same things in others, Erickson & Mohatt (1982) state that "it asserts that what one has to know in order to act appropriately as a member of a given group includes not only knowing what to do oneself, but how to anticipate and judge the actions of others" (139). The correlation between non-verbal and acting properly is tacit knowledge. This knowledge is reflected in the insider's view as presented, and the interpretation as identified, because this itself is continuously cross-checked by the culturally embedded intuitive nonverbal communication.

#### Field Notes

##### Formal Observations

The formal observation notes are those taken in the classroom context. These are notes that record what I see, hear, and feel, physically and emotionally: feeling the heat from the wood stove and the comment this elicits from the students; the scraping of chairs;

the nonverbal communication and behaviour from one student to another; from the student to the teacher; from the teacher to the student; the presence of the caretaker as he walks through the classroom during teacher instruction; the reaction elicited when the Principal sticks his head in the door; the feeling in the room when the attendance officer comes in; and the sound of the wind and rain pelting on the window pane beside a student. Everything that goes on in the classroom, the conversations, actions, sounds, and the non-verbal, are captured in the formal observation. These are coded accordingly: FO#7,18. FO is Formal Observation, #7 is the observation paragraph number, and 18, is the page number of the notebook.

#### Informal Observations

The informal observation records what I see, hear, and feel, outside the research setting, outside the classroom. These are community interactions; conversations with teachers; the Principal; the conversations with the caretaker; joining the conversation, comments and laughter in the office; watching the caretaker filling up the water tanks in the motor boat out in the middle of the lake; an entry taking in the scene as students made their daily trek over the field, detouring the ash-filled site with its protruding gnarled black pieces of metal which once

were desks, and so on. There are also my reflective notes following observation periods; my own reflective notes on my interpretations and translations; all the things I think to myself; the things I want to make note of; and the things I notice and wonder if it would be repeated in the other classroom. These are my informal field notes and they are coded accordingly, IO#8,20. IO means informal observation, number eight paragraph, on page twenty. These formal and informal observation field notes were then analyzed and reflected upon during the evenings and on the weekend.

### Interviews

The open-ended interview is usually unstructured in that the topic will drift with the conversation. In this study, keeping the foreshadowed problem in mind, several questions were focused around the topic. A copy of the general guide is included in Appendix B. A tape recorder was used to conduct the informal interviews with the four male Native teachers. Two were members of the community and the other two were from another community in northern Ontario. The youngest of the four has six years teaching experience and the eldest with fifteen years. All have taught only in Native communities in northern Ontario.

Supplemental notes were also taken during the taped interviews to record the physical surrounding,



actions, missed words compensated by actions, and the nonverbal communication and behaviour. These notes also took in the before and after interview comments, additional conversations resulting from the interview on the way out the door or at the next meeting are also recorded.

Hammersley & Atkins (1983) state that even though 'you can not argue with a tape' "non-verbal aspects and features of the physical surroundings are omitted. For this reason it is usually advisable to supplement the tape recording with jotted notes covering these matters" (p. 162).

An interview was conducted with one teacher in the Ojibwa Native language to allow for the teacher's preference for clearer articulation of thought. One taped interview was conducted from each of the four teachers involved in the study, averaging about one hour and a half per teacher. Interpreters were not required since, as stated, I speak the same dialect. The coding for these are as follows: Int:A#1,12 to mean Interview A for Allen, B for Bill, C for Calvin, or D for David, #1 is the paragraph and 12 for the page. The supplementary interview notes are coded as Sup.Int:A#3,17 to mean supplementary interview notes from Allen, paragraph 3, page 17.

### Journals

The journals were solicited from the Native teachers after the taped interviews were conducted. The purpose of the journals was to clarify or elaborate on statements made during the interview, to record thoughts which were not verbalized during the interview, reflective notes after classes, and any additional information which may have been overlooked at the time of the interview. One returned journal was written in syllabics which I translated into English at time of the Ojibwa language interview transcription. The journals were returned to me at the end of my stay in the community. Journal references are coded as: J:A#16,8 to mean Journal from Allen, paragraph 16 on page 8:

#### Documents

The document collection was a heart wrenching process. All the children's work, art, displays, student compiled Native calendars, individual workbooks, and everything that you would see if you stood in the middle of the classroom, were consumed by the fire. One teacher had a few volumes of an encyclopedia set stacked on a wooden shelf in the corner, it was all that he had salvaged from his classroom. I was shown samples of seatwork, book exercises, art work in session by the students to re-do some of the things lost in the fire. Time schedules

for teachers, and other accessible materials were available in the office. I had not the heart to take samples of the children's work as they were so preciously few. The material I did take with me were the teaching schedules, copies of lessons from the curricular program, the goals and objectives of the Circle Program which had by miracle been left at a teacher's home on the day of the fire, sample lesson from a text book and a text book worksheet. Photographs were taken of the site, the community, the buildings, and the teachers. These are coded as Doc:6,2 to mean document number 6, page 2.

The teaching materials and lessons were appraised for cultural content and community relevance, and any reflection of the teacher's practical knowledge in the classroom and other areas which had surfaced during the course of the study.

### Triangulation

Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) state that the "multi-stranded character of ethnography provides the basis for triangulation in which data of different kinds can be systematically compared" (p.24).

What I may have interpreted during the observation process may be stated by the teachers during the interview, which may again be referred to in their journals and may also be reflected in the documents.

These phenomena may also have been mentioned or identified and discussed in the literature based on past research studies.

### Data Analysis

The formal, informal notes, and the interviews as they were taken, were analyzed on a continuing basis. Special attention was given to the interpretation of the non-verbal communication and behaviour and the translations from one language to another for nonexistent words in either language. Repeated appearances of cultural values and ethics, personal knowledge, and references to specific classroom conducts were noted and categorized. In the course of the inductive analysis, several major topics emerged and other discoveries surfaced and these formed the triangulation of the data.

### Reliability and Validity

The internal validity refers to "the extent to which scientific observations and measurements are authentic representation of some reality" (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 210). The study was conducted in the natural setting of those involved in the study, presented from the 'insider's view' of the participants through the researcher who is from within the culture, substantiated and verified through the data collection to ensure that the researcher actually observed or

measured what she thought she was observing or measuring, this process ensures that the study can be considered sound.

The external validity refers to "the degree to which such representations can be compared legitimately across groups" (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 210). This can only be established by other Native teachers with similar backgrounds and in similar situations. Only when this study has been replicated by a researcher with the same background and understanding, with similar teachers, and in similar communities, will the reliability of the study be shown.

#### Summary

By using the qualitative research model and borrowing from naturalistic and other techniques of field research, this study endeavoured to explore hidden components of the culture, bringing into focus those aspects of Native education which had not been examined before. In the effort to address the lack of information in this area, this study lacks the support otherwise afforded by other similar research. The data collection methods used provided the best means of bringing the participants' voices together to reduce researcher bias and ensure an authentic 'insider's view' from within the culture.

## CHAPTER 4

## RESULTS

## Introduction

By echoing the words of the West Coast Native grandmother, this chapter will begin the process of introducing you to the Native teachers' classrooms where you may see through the description, where you may listen through the fieldnotes, and understand through the discussion and analysis.

The background which was established during the research literature review process will provide some basis for the 'sense-making' in the community context to allow for the search of a clearer understanding of the insider's perceptions and interpretations within the context of the classroom.

This process is also governed by its credibility, ensuring justification, reliability and validity, "so that readers may examine the inferences, comparisons, generalizations, predictions, or metaphors that contributed to the study findings" (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 241).

Thirteen major categories emerged in the course of the analysis of the interview transcripts, supplementary interview notes, formal and informal observation notes, solicited journals, and documents.

Based on the classroom context of Native students and their Native teachers in a northwestern Ontario community, the insider's view will be presented as it is known and understood by the participants involved in the study.

The chapter will be divided into four sections. The first section 'Native Teachers and the Classroom' will deal with Native teachers in the classroom, their past experiences as reflected in the classroom, how this effects their method of teaching and disciplining their students, and the use of nonverbal behaviour and nonverbal communication in the classroom.

The second section 'Teachers, School, and Students' will present one Native teacher's teaching methods, the views of the Native teachers on Native teachers from other First Nations who are not from northern or northwestern Ontario (non-Ojibwa or non-Oji-Cree), and opinions on non-Native teachers.

The third section 'Being a Native, Being a Teacher' will deal with the Native culture, the Native language, and the student's view of Native teachers as role models (as perceived by the Native teachers).

The final section 'Native Students and Native Teachers' will deal with the Native students, the effect on the students in the loss of their school, and some comments on the school curricula.

## Native Teachers and the Classroom

### Native teachers

In all their years of education, of the four teachers interviewed, the eldest was the only one who had been taught by a Native teacher once in elementary school.

In the time before the policy paper of Indian Control of Indian Education approved by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in 1973, Native teachers had to be, for all intents and purposes, not any different from the non-Native teachers. As the following statement attests,

A: ...I didn't think that she was Native. She was Blackfoot I guess, but she looked like a white lady...She didn't speak Indian ...she wouldn't talk in Indian (Int:A#20-23, 2).

On the topic of Native teachers teaching Native children, all four teachers expressed the opinion that it was of utmost importance.

A: Especially when teaching those primary grades. I think students feel different when they have a Native teacher, especially the teachers from up here, from this area.  
 Q: Someone from their home community?  
 A: Yep.  
 Q: In what ways?  
 A: Well, they can talk to them, talk to the teacher about their experiences and things that they do...they know that the teacher has gone through the same experience that they are going through...the same language too... (Int:A#25-30,3).  
 A: ...the discipline might be a little different, [compared to non-Native teachers] behaviour might be different...



Q: How?

A: I used to watch [Native teacher's name] when he was teaching kindergarten and he got along well with them. Talking to them in Indian sometimes...some of the kids feel better when the Native teacher is teaching, they feel more comfortable.

Q: Why?

A: Well...since that Native is from around the area and knows what's going on, kids will tend to think that he knows a lot of things that's going on in the community, or up north...and they'd be asking questions. If they want information, they can ask and he knows... A teacher is still the teacher, but he's an Indian teacher, that's how they look at Native teachers...They think, 'he's one of us' (Int:A#97-105, 8).

B: It is important that they see a Native teacher. It shows them that they can do it too. If I can do it, they can do it (Int:B#4,1).

B: And if there was a Native teacher [when he was going to school] maybe he or she could have helped me to know more about Native culture (Int:B#11,1)

C: It is good when the Native teacher is from the students' community. They have the knowledge of the culture to teach the children. They can teach the Native way of life as they are living it themselves (Int:C#31,3).

D: I know that they [the students] respect me a lot and I respect them. I have been working with them for a long time now and they would come up to me and ask me something...like if the guys need anything, they just come up to me and ask me (Int:D#45,5).  
I can see a lot of students respect the Native teachers (Int:D#45,5).

Note that this 'asking for information or asking for something' is of importance because a certain amount of trust would need to be present before one can ask with confidence.

A: I think Native teachers are needed in the primary and junior levels mostly and not necessarily in the high school level. High school students should or will have been taught by Native teachers, Native language teachers in the communities (J:A#14-16,2).

A: They [Native teachers] don't have to go through what white people normally go through when in contact with northern communities, the Natives [teachers] already know what to expect even if it's not their community they're working in. The students feel a little more comfortable and relaxed when taught by Native teachers (J:A#5-6,1).

#### Past experiences and effects on teaching

Their past experiences are also reflected in their teaching methods as the interview statements reveal.

A: I know what I did before and what they're doing now. If we talk about this, they know what I'm talking about and they know that I've been through that (Int:A#56,5).

Q: In a question/answer session, if one student is asked a question...

A: If a student is singled out?

Q: Ahuh.

A: I've never had them do it like that... If I asked them to come up and talk in front, I think they would shy away and try to make a joke out of it...No, I don't do that. I didn't like that when I was a kid. I hated doing that when I was going to school. I don't see any point in doing that... They would not answer questions if I do things like that (Int:A#199,14).

D: ...when I was young, I used to have that pressure too...I am a believer in myself...I believe in the things that I do...I try to show these students that they can do that too...(Int:D#134,11).

A: Native teachers ignore the methods which they themselves didn't like or see as practical while they were in a white school (J:A#10,1).

In discussing the urban classroom where students are expected to stand up in class to read something, Bill

responded:

No, I don't think they [the students] would do that...or go to that corner if they're bad, I don't do that. If they get into trouble, I don't point to that person. It's not right, 'cause they [the other students] might make fun of that student (Int:B#41-43,3).

Note: Students making fun of each other.

B: When a student makes a mistake, I don't say anything. I just tell her or him to try again...it's Ok if you make a mistake, I make mistakes too...so, you learn by your mistakes. That's what I tell them (Int:B#29-31,2).

In asking another teacher that if a teacher asked a student to read in front of the whole class, what would the response be, he replied,

They wouldn't talk. They wouldn't do it. I would never ask them to do that (Int:A#204,15).

The sports program also acts as an award/denial mechanism to ensure good student behaviour (Int:B#24,2; Int:D#12,2).

#### Classroom discipline

In talking about the discipline in the classroom, the teachers stated as follows:

B: I usually talk to them in my own language...I usually get to them when I speak my own language (Int:B#21,2).

B: Sometimes I just look at a student (Int:B#33,3).

D: Just by the tone of voice...or I would look at them. You have to be very open with them, with what you're saying. When you are open and honest with them, students will know that

(Int:D#12-15,2).

B: I don't confront them because it might get worse...Just use your sense of humour too to communicate with them...If I was mad they wouldn't talk to me or listen to me (Int:B#69,5).

Always as a last resort though, the student is sent to the office to see the Principal (Int:A#39,4);

(J:B#28,2). Something of interest to note here is that the teachers who are from the community talk of helping other teachers in this area. There was no reference of them going to the Principal for help with the students.

The use of humour mentioned in the last page was also referred to by the other teachers as well.

A: Sometimes I tease them a little bit, they like that. But I don't get too serious or tease them too much. I know how far to go with that (Int:A#175-176,13).

Native teachers can tease children in their own style and make them feel a little happier, relaxed and encouraged. Humour plays a great role to make a child feel relaxed and appreciated...they laugh knowing that their teacher feels the same way (J:A#7-9,1).

I also use my sense of humour and they usually joke around with me especially the boys (J:B#24-26,2).

#### Nonverbal behaviour and nonverbal communication

Asking for help from the teacher sometimes elicits teasing from the other students, so other means are used. I had noticed that during the observation in the grade seven and eight class, that there was a connection between the students' nonverbal behaviour

and the teacher's response to them. I had numbered off the students around the table and the reference for the teacher is noted as 'T'. Some of the students called the teacher's name barely above a whisper.

I didn't know which student had spoken so softly I heard T's name softly - no one moved. T got up and I watched to see which one he would go to - #1. Then when T went to the board, I heard "how do you do this?" again, I didn't know which one had spoken. T went to #4 to point out what had to be done (FO:B#50-55,4).

T is back at the desk. #4 lifts up a pencil, just off her desk. T goes over - talking to her (FO:B#65,5).

When I finally caught on, my notes indicate: #4 is stuck (FO:B#117,5), #3 is stuck (FO:B#130,8), and so on. They do not however, use the same signals all the time.

#2 puts pencil up off her desk, T goes over to help (FO:B#572:36).

#3 leaning over paper, T goes over to help (FO:B#189,11).

#2 head down on paper  
 #3 sits back, looking at paper  
 #5 rubbing her head - pencil in her mouth - doing nothing  
 T goes over to the girls to explain (FO:B#415-420,28).

#2 leans back, T goes to help (FO:B#562,36).

#2 puts up her pencil on top her paper, T goes over to help (FO:B#573,36).

The one time #2 attempted to whisper the teacher's name, resulted as follows:

#2 put her pencil up and said T's name very softly, immediately a voice from the boys

imitated her. The girl giggled in embarrassment. T went over to help (FO:B#441,30).

This may account for the signals. The boys had totally teased the girls to submission, while the boys were quite vocal in asking for help. These observations prompted the question during the interview as follows:

- Q: There were some things that happened this morning, can you explain them to me? How did you know that this one person wanted your help?
- B: She made gestures. Sometimes when they move like this [sits back in the chair] they need help...or they put up their hand like this [indicates not the hand actually but with the pencil point up - hand still on the table] or call me.
- Q: So, just by watching their body language, you know?
- B: Yeah...They have different ways of asking for help. You just have to recognize what they want, what they say, using body language (Int:B#51-56,4).

At lunch, one of the boys with a mischievous glint in his eye walked toward me, heading for the back door and I knew he was going to say something 'smart' to me. A warning glance from T changed his words to "Hey, [T's name], have a nice lunch."

I smiled at T and he said "He was going to say something else."

I laughed and said "I know."

T said "He's a good kid, one of my favourite students" (FO:B#650,40).

T told me as we were going out the door that the girls don't verbalize in asking for help because the boys would make fun of them (Sup.Int:B#78,5).

This teacher also states in his journal as follows:

When I sit down, I'm usually alert in case the students need help. The student might raise his or her hand if help is needed. Most of the time they use nonverbal signs because they don't want other students to think that they can't do the work. The student might tap a pencil or something

or use body gestures to me. The boys usually just call me if they need help (J:B#15-20,2)  
The girls are usually the ones that call me to pick up their work because they don't want to be teased by the boys. The boys usually tease the girls. If the teasing is bad, I usually send the boys to the office (J:B#39-40,3).

The formal observation notes of the grades seven and eight class taught by the Native language teacher also notes the following: #4 tapping pencil on her book. T [teacher] comes around the table to help #4 (FO:D#53,3). These are the same students in B's class and teacher D responds in the same manner as teacher B. In the grade ten class, #1 leans over sheet, head down on the table, teacher D comes and is now working with #1 (FO:D#211-213,11). It is not surprising that the habits that these students pick up in grade seven and eight evidently follow them through to high school.

It would be interesting to find out if the students have individual habits that only they use to ask for help. Since I had numbered them off in the order that they sat around the table, they did not always sit in that same order the next day. I also did not have names to attach to faces, so there was no way for me to know which student consistently used which actions.

In the grade five and six class, the boys and girls had been separated, the boys coming in the morning and the girls in the afternoon. In the grade

five and six class, one of the boys tapping on the table was immediately hushed by the others and he stopped immediately (FO:D#55,8).

The other Native language teacher, teaching kindergarten to grade four students also stated that the students don't always verbally ask for help.

C: I would know by the way they are, by their actions, reflections of their feelings, like they were getting angry or frustrated. I would know why they are like this because they were stuck and unable to do what I had asked (Int:C#90-92,5; other examples repeated, 94-95,6 and 98-99,6).

C: I know what they're thinking. I try to understand how the students' mind works. I can figure out what his/her thought processes are. It is difficult to get into the child's way of thinking, one must learn how to do this, and this is reflected in the lesson plans. The lesson plans work very well if the student is well understood (Int:C#176-178,9).

### Teachers, School, and Students

I was very much impressed with one teacher during the observation period and he went to great length to explain the method he uses to teach in the interview. During the observation, I noticed that he watched the children very carefully, smiling, laughing, nodding, side-glance warning, and soft conversation level voice in telling students to sit down, or stop playing with that ball. Always with each request, there was also an explanation why. Again, the teacher is 'T' in the formal observation notes and the children around the



table are numbered off from the door to the right. No English words appeared in any of the observation sessions [this required simultaneous translation for the observation notes], conversations [informal field notes were translated and recorded soon after the event], the interview was translated at the time of transcription and the journal was also translated from the Ojibwa syllabics into English at that time.

One Native Teacher's Teaching Method

Grade 2 class:

T: Write softly first - your weak outline. If you press too hard you can't erase it (FO:C#53,3).

Note of interest:

#3b [boy] has water coloured at the bottom of the sheet, two stick men in a boat, three ducks in the sky and draws lines from stick men holding guns (to indicate shots) one duck is in the water and one shot curves from the man's gun through the head of the other man, curves around to hit the duck in the water in front of the boat (fine shot!) (FO:C#74-81,4).

Grade 3 class:

T pauses and looks at boys playing with tiny rubber balls) T says in a conversation voice: Put them away, those things you are playing with, or I'll take them. They are distracting you (FO:C#160,8).

#3 girl stands up to show him which picture was hers on the wall, he smiles then 'glances indicating her paper on the table'. She immediately sits down and begins to work (FO:C#97,10).

#4 girl is continually talking, T says: [Name], do you know that you talk too much, you can't get your work done if you're busy talking.

She grins back at him and begins her work (FO:C#103,11).

## Kindergarten class:

After reading them a hunting story, he asked them some questions.

T: What did they do with the moose meat?

#2: They sold it.

T: It says here, that they gave it away. They did not sell it to get money.

## Grade 1 class:

Beginning of class, T instructs:

Listen carefully and do not talk. I will give you a paper afterward. I will know then if you had listened or not (FO:C#350,18).

## Grade 4 class:

Beginning of class, T puts up a finger and says:

You are not to talk when I am reading. I will not show you pictures. Listen and you will draw a picture about the story when I have finished.

#3 has a pencil in his mouth and running his hand along the edge of the table.

T: Get that out of your mouth - (same voice level) (FO:C#425-530,22).

T: Don't forget, do your outline very lightly with your pencil so you don't wreck your paper when you erase (FO:C#448,23).

The purpose of this section of observation notes was to give a background to what he says in the following interview. I asked him how he handles unruly students - how he disciplines the children in the classroom. His response is as follows:

First when I start, [at the beginning of the year] I find out what they'd like. Then I take that - their ideas, I take those and write them down and I follow them - their rules. They decide the consequences and if they do something against the rules that they established, they must take the consequences that they have decided on. It leaves them with no recourse since it was theirs. It is their ideas coming back at them. If they came from me - they wouldn't listen to me. If I made

up the rules myself, they wouldn't respect them. The rules would be mine and they would have no ownership in the decision. I know this to be true and it is one thing I know that works (Int:C#47-52,4).

At the end of my presentation, I give them time where I no longer speak and the time is theirs to complete their part of the task. They decide for themselves how they use the information that I have given them. They do not speak since they have their work in front of them...they have the option to take any part of the information I've given to use for their seat work...From this, I evaluate their level of comprehension of the Native language. I give them a percentage at the bottom of the page...the final marks from each unit tells me who has the lowest mark and who has the highest. They like this very much because they always know how they are doing. This was their idea and I do what they have decided should happen as a consequence. If a student is fooling around and teasing, they get two points off. I remind them of this, so they behave. I also give them monthly awards and prizes to the best students. They like getting prizes, like certificates (Int:C#53-72,4).

I watch them all, all the time, each day I see them. I make comments in my notes and I pay attention to the person who is having problems. I watch and help them along constantly in their progress (Int:C#96-97,6).

In describing the process he used to help the student of another teacher through some difficulty in school, he states, "he began to forget the anger and frustration that he had. This process allowed him not to suffer any shame for his actions" (Int:C#193-194,10).

Here is an exemplary Native teacher using traditional practical knowledge. So much of the information, if not all of the topics presented in the literature review are embedded within his teaching

method. This will be analyzed in the next chapter.

#### Other Native teachers

The discussion of Native teachers from elsewhere in the country surfaced during the course of the conversations with the teachers to determine whether it made any difference if Native teachers were from the same area or if they speak the same dialect as the students. The consensus of the teachers was that, no, it did not make any difference where the Native teacher was from or if they spoke a different dialect, they would still have a close communication with the students. They certainly would know more about the Native culture than a non-Native would, and these students would also get a chance to find out that there are different ways of Native living (Int:D#59,6); (Int:A#145-146,11); (Int:B#18-19,2); (Int:C#36,3).

#### Non-Native teachers

In the conversations about non-Native teachers, they stated that if a non-Native teacher experiences difficulty with the students, it is because they do not understand the students and this leads to discipline problems. The one non-Native teacher that the students apparently respected was more like a Native, in that he did a lot of the traditional and cultural activities, and that he got involved with the local people. The consensus was that if they were willing to participate

in the community and with the students, they would get along better (Int:D#45,5); (Int:D#48,5); (Int:D#55,5); (D#64-67,6); (Int:D#69-73,7); (Int:A#95,8).

### Being a Native, Being a Teacher

#### Native culture

It is very important to these teachers that the students know their culture. In asking if the Native culture was important to him in his children's education, one teacher replied, "Yep. I would not want them to lose their identity, the language, and the cultural things" (Int:D#71,7); (IO:D#398,20). It follows that the teacher would need to possess this cultural knowledge in order to teach the children the cultural values, the ways of seeing things and doing things that their fathers and grandfathers did, and the students apparently enjoy these activities (Int:D#75-76,7). One teacher talked about producing a cultural documentation on video and an outdoor cultural program (Int:D#122-123,10; Int:D391-92,8). Another teacher expressed regret that there was not a Native cultural curriculum when he was a student (Int:C#22,2). He states that a Native teacher "has the knowledge of the culture to teach the children. They can teach the Native way of life as they are living it themselves" (Int:C#31,3).

In reference to the children, one teacher says,

They learn by observing the teacher - what he does, they learn by watching what the teacher is doing. When a Native teacher is talking about culture, he does the things that he is teaching about (Int:C#123-128,7).

Another teacher states that he knows about the Native culture because he went to school in his home community. In asking him what Native culture meant to him, his response was,

Native culture is a way of life for the Natives. The things they did long ago and the things they still do now. They should respect the values of the Native culture (Int:B#26-27,2).

Another teacher stated that he understands more about the Native culture and has more knowledge to share with the students than an outside-person [non-Native] would. In asking whether he thought this was important, he responded,

Yes, it is important... to do the things that their [the students] fathers were doing, and their grandfathers. If they move away then they'll forget. As long as they remember the things, that they don't forget anything, then they may come back up north again (Int:A#53-54,5).

The cultural content of the curriculum is seen as the presentation of the other necessary half of the students' development of knowledge and personal growth (Doc:l,i-x).

#### Native language

The Native language is presented as an invaluable means of reaching students in the classroom setting. For these teachers, there is a lot of satisfaction and

comfort in just being able to communicate with the students in their own language (Int:A#62,5); (Int:B#111,10); (Int:A#119,9). The Native language also provides an alternate means of instruction and for clarification where the lesson is given in English first and then in the Native language (Int:B#48-49,4); (J:B#9-10,1); (J:B#22,2). In one case, the teacher states that he uses the Native language first and then the English "so they can understand more...makes a balance (Int:D#111,10).

"They [the students] would communicate with the teacher who speaks the same language or dialect...its easier if they have a teacher that speaks the same language. So the teacher can explain the problems that they have" (Int:B#13-15,1).

"They [the students] speak the Native language all the time, they don't normally speak English. I do hear some parents speaking to their children in English but the children don't respond or respect the English language even when their parents speak it" (Int:C#153-156,8).

The School Board is encouraging that too, that the students keep their language for as long as possible (Int:A#67,6).

Where communities are losing their language, Native teachers are needed to encourage students to keep their language and traditions (J:A#11-12,2).

In speaking about one of the difficulties a Native student might experience in an urban classroom, this teacher stated:

The English language...the people down south talk faster than people up north, I think...When I was down south, I used to talk faster but when I came

here, I had to slow down...really slow down"  
(Int:A#116-117,9).

### Native teachers as role models

In speaking about Native teachers as role models for Native students, after a slight uncomfortable pause and a smile, there was a grudging acknowledgement that yes, they would be seen as role models. As one teacher states:

If I can become a teacher, you can become a teacher too. You can be anybody if you put your mind to it...I think there will be more Native teachers" (Int:A#142-143,11); (J:A#20-22,2).

Another teacher said that,  
It is important that they see a Native teacher.  
It shows them that they can do it too. If I can do it, they can do it (Int:B#5,1).

One teacher expressed this opinion without being asked the question:

A Native teacher can be a role model for Native students, not just in the classroom but also at the community level. That's how I see a Native teacher...I try to show these students that they can do those things too" (Int:D#85-87,8).

## Native Students and Native Teachers

### Native students

In reference to Native students' personal autonomy and non-interference, it is not surprising to hear one of the Native teachers expressing his frustrations with non-Native teachers who do not understand the students. The problem seems to be the non-Native teacher's perception of the class as a whole rather than dealing with the students as individuals with individual needs



and differences. Another problem as expressed is the 'follow my rules or else' attitudes of non-Native teachers that totally goes against everything the child may have been led to understand was within his control since childhood. This, as a foregone conclusion usually results in trouble for the child, and the teacher causes 'a lot of damage to the students' (Int:C#195-221,10,11).

It [the rules and regulations] comes from themselves [the non-Native teachers] only. The students do not like this. Even if the teacher dictates the rules - the students will not follow them because it is something [the rules] that belongs to the teacher. The students are not stupid, they are smart (Int:C#225-229,11).

The result of this miscommunication or lack of understanding is also mentioned by the other teachers (Int:D#16-18,2); (Int:D#45-46,5); (Int:D#53-54,5); (Int:A#95,8); and (Int:A#172,13).

During a conversation about the different activities in an urban classroom, I wondered what would happen if a teacher said students would have to raise their hands before saying something...

The teacher responded:

They would find that weird, especially these kids. Some of them have been down south in other schools but most of them haven't gone anywhere (Int:A#112,9).

#### Loss of the school

The topic of the school burning down emerged during the third interview and thus ensured that the

topic would come up again for the last interview.

- Q: Do you notice a difference with this new setting than it was before the school burnt down, in the classroom?
- A: Sometimes I would have a hard time in getting them to work, while I'm working with another group. This way, I can work with just one group.
- A: They do more work here. In the other classroom, I was too busy with the other group and the others weren't really working. I think it works a lot better (Int:A#43-50,4).
- Q: Do you notice a difference in the students since the school burnt down, now that they are in the teacher's homes?
- A: Yes, quite different. Their security was like an umbrella before the school burnt down, they were secure and didn't worry about anything. Now, that umbrella is full of holes, leaking water, and they are groping for support, assurance, and comfort. They are just...not at peace. The rooms where they are working are also very small, and they don't feel like coming, they tend to miss a lot.
- Q: They don't like going to school in a teacher's home?
- A: No, they don't like it there because they are not allowed to touch or handle anything, there is nothing there for them. Not like they used to have in class, all their activity things were theirs to pick up. That is one thing they miss (Int:C#75-83,5).
- Q: Do you find it easier teaching a smaller group of students than it was with the full classroom before the school burnt?
- A: Yes. It is easier with the smaller numbers...they learn faster because they are not distracting each other. It works better (Int:C#114-117,7).

### The curriculum

On the topic of the school curricula, two of the teachers spoke of adjusting the school work to suit the students' abilities (Int:B#45,3); (Int:C#98,6). There

was also an expression of concern about the proficiency level in E.S.L. of the students going into high school (Int:B#47,3); (Int:B#76,5).

In his journal, one teacher expressed his frustration with the lack of materials in the Native Language program. He states that the Ministry should develop a community based curriculum instruction package, with activity sheets and lesson plans for each unit. Workshops would also be helpful for Native language teachers to share resource materials, ideas and lesson plans. The Native language teachers in each community should pool their resources together and establish a Native Language Instructor's Kit. He states that there are four or five communities with Native language teachers who speak the same dialect and that these should be used by the Ministry to accomplish this (J:C#2-10,1).

CHAPTER 5  
DISCUSSION

After the research data analysis, it is certainly clear why Native teachers are in demand in Native community schools. The issues to be explored in this study as initially stated are:

1. How are Native values and practices reflected in the student and teacher interactions?
2. What is traditional practical knowledge as it is used by Native teachers in the classroom?

There will be three sections to this chapter, the first section will discuss the topics in the literature review in relation to the research findings.

The second section will explore the resulting categories from the literature review and the research findings as to their applicability to the research questions above.

The third section will examine the Native teacher's traditional practical knowledge as it will be defined within the second research question, to determine if it is applicable to Elbaz's (1981) five orientations of practical knowledge.

What this categorization involves is an attempt at piling balls. One cannot separate and put into distinct categories an interlocking network system.

For the purposes of analysis, this attempt will be at best, a superficial one to illustrate that the questions have indeed not only been answered but have also produced some enlightening phenomena, which can then serve as topics for further research in this area.

#### Native Learning Environment

##### Research

##### Preference to visual learning

The presentation from the 'insider's view' where communication takes place by watching and interpreting the nonverbal behaviour and nonverbal communication in the classroom, by listening to and understanding the tone of voice and choice of words used by the speakers, and the reactions and responses from the others, clearly demonstrates that the visuals are only a small accompaniment to the learning process.

The reader may now begin to appreciate the difficulty with the statement that 'because Native students are oriented to visual learning, they are "handicapped in their ability to succeed"' (Kaulback 1984, p. 35; Whyte, 1986).

Why are Native students deemed to be visually oriented? It is perhaps the only learning mode left that is open to them when taught by a non-Native teacher. The comprehension acquired from hearing would not work so well if the language of instruction is

foreign and concepts as explained in this language may also seem backward compared to the Native method of teaching. Learning through implicit understanding would also not work if the nonverbal signals received are all jumbled up. If the students are interpreting conflicting messages and if the statements and instructions from the non-Native teacher are interpreted as very demeaning to the students, this would be an attack on personal autonomy and respect. What then is left?

The only sensible thing to do in this case is to shut out the noise from the gesturing body of chaos and try to learn by watching something else (besides the teacher) - the visuals. It is therefore, not the student who is handicapped, but the non-Native teacher who is handicapped to succeed as a teacher of Native children.

#### Asking Questions

Pepper and Henry's (1989) observation regarding the question-asking as reserved for and found only in schools is also answered by statements made so far. It is impolite to ask a question of someone after they had just finished telling you, this shows your ignorance and disrespect that you had not been listening. Another consideration is that you may be imposing yourself on someone's personal ground by

asking a question of them. The questioning from the teachers during the formal observations in the classrooms were indirect, some were posed more like comments, and they were directed at the whole, and not to individual students. This was evident in all the classrooms and a reference of this from just one class would look as follows: (FO:C#76,4; FO:C#324,327,336,17; FO:C#362,19; FO:C#472,25; and so on. This was also stated by the teachers during the interviews as reported on page seventy-eight and seventy nine of this paper. Swisher & Deyhle (1989) observe:

I have noticed that when I asked a question, the (Pima) students would not respond; there was dead silence. But when I made a comment without questioning, they were more likely to respond and join in the discussion (Teacher, personal communication, 1988)" (p.5-6).

My own questioning during the first interview, did not elicit as full an answer if it was stated in a full direct question, as it did when the questions were presented as comments. But, having the 'cultural sense' of this, after the first example, I moved into the more comfortable mode of conversation using questionary comments naturally emerging from sections of a train of thought, or short interjections of 'how?' 'why?'. Some of these are present in the quotations presented in the findings.

#### Asking for something

Asking for something is also a very personal

affair. This is where the reference from the Native teacher interviews (Int:A#97-105,8 and Int:D#45,5) about the students feeling free to ask Native teachers anything, is of importance.

You would have to know the person very well to ensure that they would not take offense at your asking. (Imagine then, the dilemma that this research process had subjected me and the other participants to. Hence, my plea for pardon from those involved.)

To avoid the risk of being humiliated by a turn-down which would then leave feelings of anger and resentment to the person for the humiliation, then a person may 'imply a request' by stating a wish for something in the presence of another who has the wished-for object. This provides a measure of safety in the mutually understood option of 'missing' the implied request. As an example:

If Bob wants to use his neighbour's fishing rod, he may walk over to visit his neighbour, Jim. When the time is right, just enough time to ensure that it doesn't appear like he came across for a purpose other than to visit, the conversation may go like this:

Bob, looking out the window at the dock says:  
 Boy, if I had a fishing rod, I'd like to fish just off the dock there for a while this evening.

Jim has the option of saying:  
 Here, borrow this. I won't need it this evening.

Or, Jim could say:  
 I got that on sale at the store for twenty bucks.

Meaning: Go buy your own fishing rod!



Depending on the answer, Bob could either say  
 Good, we'll have fried fish together if I  
 catch one.

Or, if the answer was the second option, then  
 this leaves room for Bob to save face by saying,  
 Twenty bucks? I'll have to get one tomorrow.  
 Maybe, we can go fishing together then.

This way, there are no bad feelings on either side.

Imagine now, the teacher in the classroom who says,  
 "No, you may not!", "Don't touch that!", "Stand up!",  
 "Raise your hand, before you speak!". It is barbaric.

### Teacher Superiority

As outlined earlier in this thesis, Philips (1972)  
 speaks of the difficulties that non-Native teachers  
 encounter when they take on the role of superiority in  
 the classroom of Native students. Ordering the student  
 to speak may as well be telling the student never to  
 speak again in class. It is a given that teacher  
 dictatorship will meet with resistance  
 (Sup.Int:C#508,26).

This is explained by the Native teachers in  
 the interviews where they speak of the rules and  
 regulations as being 'owned by the teacher' and  
 therefore has nothing to do with the students and the  
 consequences that follow (Int:C#225-229,11; Int:D#16-  
 18,2; Int:D#45-46,5; Int:D#53-54,5; Int:A#95,8; and  
 Int:A#172,13).

### Peer Teasing

Greenbaum & Greenbaum (1983) and Philips (1972)

speak of the peer teasing and ridicule that occurs in the classroom and the words uttered barely above a whisper. The one Native teacher that I observed and interviewed had attempted to deal with this situation by dividing the classrooms between the boys and girls. The lower grades were divided in this manner also, but partly to accommodate the size of the temporary classroom set-up in the 'den' of the teacher's homes.

By using past experience and practical knowledge in ways to lessen and inhibit this action, all the Native teachers have been able to achieve is to learn to read the barely perceptible nonverbal behaviour of the students needing assistance. This is obviously something that is totally out of their control and it is something that is wholly governed by the students.

I would identify this kind of teasing as a cultural phenomena in which the boys are in the process of re-establishing their ranking order from the community into the schoolroom. A threat to this order is perceived to come from the girls because they are apparently doing better than the boys (Int:A#39,4; J:B#21,2) and so the boys begin the teasing in the attempt to control the learning environment. But, it is only logical though, that by inhibiting the girls' behaviour in the classroom, it heavily binds them to their school work and as a result, become more

knowledgeable in the subjects than the boys. This would also be evidenced in higher levels of education where the women generally tend to excel in quiet deliberation. This is, of course, purely speculation on my part, but here is another topic for research.

The classrooms of the Native teachers that I had observed are governed very much according to cultural mores and this allowed the teachers themselves to function as neutral entities in the cultural environment of the classroom.

When the teasing and refusal to speak takes place in a non-Native teacher's classroom, then the situation would be drastically changed. In an effort to explain this, I will resort again to the metaphor of the sparrows mentioned throughout this paper which will now represent the girls in the classroom. The bird that is a threat and bigger than a sparrow would be the boys. In this place, the boys are loud and vocal as was observed in the Native teachers' classroom. In a classroom governed by a non-Native teacher, the bird that is a threat and bigger than the boys' bird, would be the non-Native teacher mentioned in Philips' (1972) article. In this place, there are only two options, the boys and the girls unite and become one whole class that will not talk, or violence erupts (Greenbaum & Greenbaum 1983; Dumont & Wax 1969). The two smaller

birds come together in solidarity against the threat of the bigger bird.

### Teaching Native Children

#### Silent Listening and Watching

How many times does any mother say to a child, "Sh, look!". First the child must be quiet, so he/she can observe without distraction and not disturb the object of study. It may be in a park, watching a bird, squirrel, or a duck. Or the mother may say "Sh, listen!" They may be in church or listening to an Elder speak in the Native community. Watch, listen, then tell yourself what you see and hear. When you have understood, then you may tell me. This is what is described in scholarly fashion by Philips (1983) in which she states, "There is some evidence that this silent listening and watching was...traditionally the first step in learning skills of a fairly complex nature" (p.386).

#### Using Visuals

The suggestion should be clear by now that using visuals in the classroom does not necessarily mean everything and anything that you can watch. For example, the interpretation derived from watching non-Native people on video will be much the same as watching the non-Native teacher in the classroom. It is also only common sense, that if the English is a

second language that the meaning and interpretations may also be misconstrued, so it is better to demonstrate by using concrete examples along with the verbal instruction. This of course would not necessarily be the same method used if the instruction is taught by a Native teacher in the Native language.

#### Small Group Work

The effective small group work referred to in the literature, and in Philips (1972) also works well in the Native classroom settings as described in the Native teacher interviews (Int:A#43-50,4; Int:C#75-83,5; Int:C#114-117,7).

### Nonverbal Communication and Behaviour

#### The Study

As stated in the literature review, the nonverbal communication is the intuitive form of communication and the nonverbal behaviour is that which is apparent to the eye. This section will provide examples from the formal observation notes and clarify how this phenomenon was observed, interpreted, and reported in the formal observation process.

Note that there is a difference in the 'glance' and the 'look' as recorded in the analysis of the data that distinguishes it from the nonverbal communication and the nonverbal behaviour. The difference depends on the intensity, the duration, the accompanying gesture

(if there is one), the context, and the intended meaning and understanding. There is a saying that you can't take back words, well, neither can you take back a nonverbal.

#### Nonverbal behaviour

The actions witnessed in the classrooms of the students signalling the teacher when they need assistance, is mentioned as nonverbal behaviour. One teacher also states in the interview, "They have different ways of asking for help. You just have to recognize what they want, what they say, using body language" (Int:B#56,4). Other examples of nonverbal behaviour witnessed in the classrooms, include the side-glance warnings for students to behave (FO:C#46,3), the girls glancing at each other then to the boy in the corner then they giggle (FO:D#73,4). My observation notes from the grade two class before the Native teacher arrived, reads:

One girl came in for water, goes 'eh he' looking at me, (giggles). She is drinking water, glancing at me. I keep my head down. Three drinks, she's still glancing at me. I keep my head down, pretending not to see. She'll act up or get shy if I do. Want to see? I look. Now she knows I'm looking at her, she turns her head, very shy, she covers up the cup as she drinks, and very self-consciously throws her water cup down beside the water and ducks back into the room with the kids (FO:C#115,6).

#### Nonverbal communication

The examples of nonverbal communication include, the incident as recorded at lunch with the boy coming

toward me (FO:B#650:40), and there was another boy shifting gears between confidence and discomfort so often I later asked my hostess why. I had no way of knowing that there was a new haircut underneath that scarf (IO:B#624,39). When I saw the nonverbal communication from the teacher to the student, at the speed I was writing I only had time to put a dash in front as an indicator or 'before and after'. It is written down in the notebook as if he had verbalized it since it is understood as such. Note also the references about discipline where the teachers say "I just look at them" (Int:B#33,3; Int:D#12-15,2).

An example of this is:

Kid sneaking up behind me to see what I'm doing, look from -T 'get out of there' - he's gone (FO:B#345,19).

This is an example from the grade one class:

#2b made a comment [when he saw me]  
 T: she can understand you  
 Me: you shouldn't have told him  
 - T: let him say what he wants...  
 T: laughs  
 - kid feels bad, now behaves himself, gets embarrassed when I glance at him (FO:C#348,18).

My notes also indicate the reaction I got from the little ones when I came into the crowded little den area where they sat around the table:

They keep looking at me, 'I am too close to them, I've invaded their space. I should move back but there is no room' (FO:C#32,2).

One teacher states, during the interview (quoted, p.

83) about knowing how the students' mind works, by knowing how they are, the reflections of their feelings...(Int:C#176-178,9). Since there is no word for this in the native language, this is how the nonverbal communication would be described.

#### Cultural Transmission in the Classroom

##### Classroom Culture

There is no question that cultural values mediate the interaction between Native teachers and their students. They influence how they speak, act, and interact with one another. Since the Native language is also extensively used in the classroom, the classroom environment is in the cultural context.

##### Native language

Discussing children in a northwestern Ontario Native community, Reynolds (1991) states: "Children respond to instruction and discipline in a more positive manner when the Native language is used at school..." (p.107). She also notes that when the Native teacher was working with the students in the Native language, they were more apt to respect one another. Since the Native language is embedded in the culturally defined social rules of behaviour, the teachers have also stated that they usually get through to the students when they speak to them in the Native language (Int:B#21,2; Int:D#12-15,2).



The sense of humour is also effective in warding off negative feelings, allowing the participants to 'save face'.

### Non-Native Culture

Auerback & Burgess (1987), state that "...no curriculum is neutral: Each reflects a particular view of the social order..." (p.150). I am reminded of an instance in the grade six classroom where they were reading from a book about a baby bird in a shoe box, from which they were filling in blanks in a workbook.

T: What would you do with a baby bird?  
 #2 Kill it and feed my cat.  
 T: People in the city wouldn't like that.  
 #1 & #3: We would kill the birds.  
 T: Answer, try to calm the baby bird.  
 (FO:A#205-209,12)

For these children, the logical thing to do would be to kill the baby bird.

### Native Teachers

#### Classroom Tempo

Foreman (1991) mentions the 'sense of timing' that is culturally based. In my observation of the classrooms, the activities flowed from one to the other in a comfortable tempo. There was no strict time evident except for the Native language teacher who must appear at certain times of the day to accommodate the other teachers' schedules. The recess, lunch and after school time was also a trickle-in and out affair of a few minutes or so. Smith & Geoffrey (1968) and Kounin

(1970) also speak of the sense of pacing, doing things at the right time as being important in the classroom.

In my observations, the students were relatively free to play with the computers or card games in the classroom when their tasks were completed provided that they did not interrupt others who were not finished yet, until it was time to start another activity (FO:A#160,9; 190,11; 350,19; 650,34; 970,41; FO:B#70,5;140,8;280,16;350,19;495,32;618,38). I too found it a very comfortable place to be.

### Practical Knowledge

#### One Native Teacher's Practical Knowledge

The exemplary Native teacher's practical knowledge will be presented in systematic order as the transcript appeared in the summary of the data findings.

The teacher is from the community, so he shares the same language and culture with the students. The methods he uses in the classroom stem from the cultural and traditional methods of proper social conduct and interaction, and his past educational experience directs his actions in the classroom. His communication with the students is heavily bound in cultural protocol of nonverbal behaviour and communication, and has a highly traditional outlook on life and the environment. His teaching methods reflect this cultural foundation which will now be identified

as the traditional practical knowledge of a Native teacher.

#### Individual autonomy

At the beginning of the year, he finds out what rules and consequences the students would like to abide by. Then he takes their ideas and writes them down and those are what they follow.

This is an example of non-interference, giving personal autonomy--he did not tell them what to do, respect for others, shared control and responsibility, and group consensus.

He reiterates that if the rules and consequences were dictated by him, the students would not listen. The rules would be his alone and the students would have no ownership.

The dictation of rules by the teacher relieves the students of any responsibility, belittles their ability to be responsible, and leaves no vested interest or personal input for the student in the classroom.

When his presentation is over, the students know what they are to do. The students have the freedom to choose the activity of application for their seat work.

#### Student and teacher expectations

The expectations from the teacher and the students are clearly stated. There are no misunderstandings as to what they expect from each other. The teacher remains gently firm while demanding work, and allowing the students to choose the activity gives them control over their own learning. This gives the students self-esteem, confidence, self-discipline, self-direction,

and allows students to share information and ideas. No spot-lighting occurs, there is co-operative group learning, and there is free sharing of supplies and materials which are kept in a central location.

#### Group decision and group consensus

Marks are given on each lesson sheet and the total tallied up at the end of the unit. This evaluation process allows the children to always know how they are doing. This was also the students' idea and again consequences for misbehaviour, and awards and prizes for good behaviour, was decided on by the students.

Teacher direction is very minimal, decision making is by group consensus, and there is no individual competition between students. The classroom is set at a culturally based tempo, voice pitch and tone at Native conversation level, and the lessons are based on cultural experiences in the Native life.

#### Parental involvement

He also states that the curriculum was planned "according to the wishes of the parents - what they wanted their children to be taught" (Int:C#143,8).

There is not only student involvement in the classroom environment but also parent involvement in the planning of the curriculum.

#### Sensitivity to nonverbal signals

He watches them all, continually from one to another, every time he sees the students. He makes comments in his notes and gives his attention to those who need assistance. He watches and helps them along continuously.

He is reading the nonverbal signals in the class. He

sees and interprets the nonverbal behaviour and nonverbal communication of each student, looking for those who did not comprehend some aspect of the lesson. He is highly attuned to the nonverbal cues of his students since "a shared culture also shares communication systems as well" (LaFrance & Mayo, 1978, p.173). In this way, he can intercept potential problems or conflicts, counsels and supports the students, is sensitive to contradictory concepts from the curriculum, models the culture for the students, and displays a close relationship with the students.

#### Cultural intervention strategies

The process that he used to help the student of another teacher allowed the student not to suffer any shame for his actions.

He states that because the non-Native teachers cannot understand or recognize the signals indicating that the student is having trouble, it always reaches the 'bad behaviour' stage, at which time they begin sending the students to the office (Int:C#206-210,11).

He describes two instances involving two different students and two different teachers, using the same process. He starts with a one to one personal conversation in the Native language, with the distraught student who tells him in detail the events that led to the trouble with his teacher. Then he systematically begins to address and work with the student in each subject area of difficulty, teaching in English and in the Native language, supporting, encouraging, and building confidence and soon the student begins to catch on, begins to learn, becomes happier, confident, and begins to forget the anger, "like starting an engine...that student now knows the subjects very

well (Int:C#215,11).

His culturally sensitive intervention strategies show great sensitivity, rapport, understanding, knowledge, and love of children. This is what a Native teacher's traditional practical knowledge looks like.

#### How Are Native Values and Practices Reflected In The Student and Teacher Interactions?

##### Visual Learning

Visual learning as identified by the researchers, may indicate the only perceived mode of learning available if the instruction is in English and taught by non-Native teachers. In the Native classroom, the instruction is holistic in nature, where communication is in the verbal Native language and in the nonverbal communication, where interaction is not only two way between teacher and student but reflected also in multi-sensory messages between teacher and students, between students, and students to teacher.

##### Cultural Values

The Native values and practices are also reflected in the culturally based classroom environment as evidenced by interactions of questioning patterns and comments, social conduct, sense of timing, practical knowledge based on experience, bilingual instruction, the nonverbal discipline strategies used, the respect for non-interference, personal autonomy, and group

harmony.

What is Traditional Practical Knowledge  
as it is Used by Native Teachers in The Classroom?

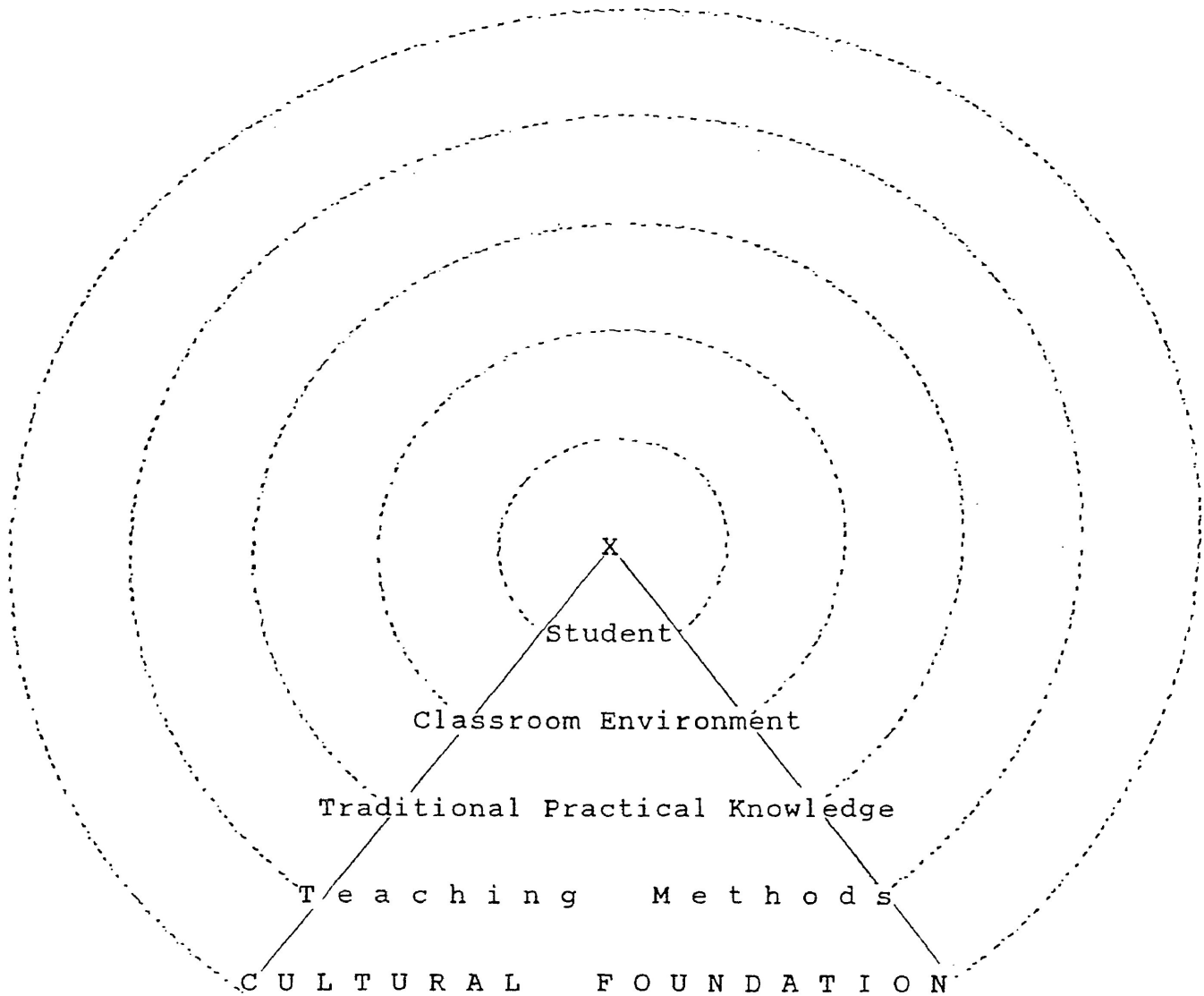
The past section on practical knowledge gave an overall view of this topic which states that a Native teacher's teaching methods are based on the cultural foundation that is reflected as the practical knowledge as used in the classroom (See Figure 1).

Looking from the teepee top down, we would see a series of circles, the X being the centre. Observing from this angle, it could be stated that the traditional practical knowledge as it is used and reflected in the classroom interactions between students and teacher are rooted in the teaching methods dictated by the Native cultural values and practices of the Nation.

As stated earlier, the realization came during the course of the formal observations that question one was embedded within the second question while I was in the process of observing and interpreting the cultural nonverbal communication in the classroom. I saw how these values and practices were directly linked to the teaching method and classroom interaction. The explanation and examples of these are given in the Native teacher's practical knowledge section of this chapter.

Figure 1.

Native Teacher Traditional Practical Knowledge





## The Five Orientations of Practical Knowledge

### Traditional Practical Knowledge

Elbaz (1981) characterizes the content of practical knowledge as "knowledge of subject matter, curriculum, instruction, self, and the milieu of schooling" (p.48). The five orientations that give shape and identity to the content areas are "situational, theoretical, personal, social, and experiential" (p.49)

Viewed under the light of the Native teacher's traditional practical knowledge, it would appear as follows:

Situational - would be reflected in the practical knowledge required in responding to the children's needs in a culturally appropriate manner, it would also include the methods employed which are based on past experiences.

Personal - would be reflected in the personal counselling and assisting of students, taking personal interest in their well being in the school and in the community, and also reflect the personal beliefs and cultural values in the teachers' statements and actions.

Social - would be reflected in the teaching knowledge as based on past experience, by cultural demands, the intuitive nonverbal communication, the awareness of the tactical manoeuvre around and between culturally defined rules of behaviour and ethics.

Experiential - would be reflected in the experienced time, pacing or tempo of the classroom environment, allows for spontaneous activities, and the smooth flow from one activity to another.

Theoretical - would be reflected in the strong highly valued cultural foundation, supported by past experience as students.

The structures which house the characteristics of content and orientations can either be in the rules of practice, in practical principles, or image (Elbaz, 1981). These would of course be sheltered within the umbrella of the cultural foundation of the Native teacher's traditional practical knowledge.

Based on the definition given by Elbaz (1981) of a teacher's practical knowledge and on this exercise, the Native teacher's traditional practical knowledge as it has been defined in this research, could be applicable to Elbaz's model. However, how each orientation is defined for specific Ojibwa teachers would of course be slightly different.

## CHAPTER VI

## Conclusions and Implications

This study has focused on Native teachers in the classroom, but as all things holistic, other issues had to be presented and examined in the attempt at understanding the whole picture. It is my hope that this process has shed some light on some educational issues affecting Native people.

Limitations

As is probably most often the case with qualitative research, the researcher laments the limited time available for research in the field. Due to the unfortunate circumstances that surrounded my research site, an extended research time for repeated interviews with the teachers involved, to examine the unexpected topics that had emerged as the research progressed would have been desirable.

Since the findings are based on these particular teachers in this Ojibwa community, I would have liked the opportunity to conduct the same research at another similar community as originally planned.

The point in time and the travel cost to the site also prohibited a repeated visit.

It would have perhaps offered a different perspective in the student peer teasing in the classroom, had there been a female Native teacher

at the school to involve in the study.

Having once established a research procedure and to have been involved in this research, I have a great desire to follow up on several of the further research topics and to replicate the study at another site.

#### Personal Reflections

Had I known what I was to experience, I would have felt better prepared mentally and emotionally to undertake the rigor that this research presented me with. In all honesty, I knew that research by a Native person was desperately needed on this topic but I also knew why there was such a lack of it. In the past, I had felt indignant at the intrusion of a non-Native researcher, probing me for answers, subjecting and reducing me to feeling like a mere object of study. In reading research about Native people, I too found it demeaning, referring to my Nativeness as a static state of being and not the motion of life as I know it to be. Based on this bias, I endeavoured to be as objective as possible during the research process.

It was easy for me to sit in my city office and plot out my thesis proposal, but when I stepped back into that world, it welcomed and claimed me once again. What right had I, to be a traitor, exposing elements that had so far been safely hidden from the probing eyes of researchers. These researchers didn't see what

was invisible to them because they didn't know of its existence. Now, here I was, saying "Here, you missed something. No, don't call it that, that is not what it is from this view..." How many hidden shapes can you see in a painting if you don't know that there are any? But, I have not by any means attempted to name or draw attention to everything that may be of importance.

My field note entry to myself on the evening after the first interview reads:

What on earth am I doing? I think I might be going through the metamorphoses that I was so afraid of. This activity is clearly conflicting with my Nativeness. I have the urge to go back to the safety of my invisible wall and blindly go through the process "pretending to be white" is how I would say it as a Native person (IO:418-424,22).

After I had established the location of my invisible wall, then I was able to function with full Native faculties intact and record on one side, then slip to the other side as a researcher for the sense-making decoding, reflection, and objective scrutiny of my analysis. This is where my physical location during my non-Native research activity became a blessing. I was housed with a non-Native teacher where I could function in the English mode. Had I also been in a Native environment for the analysis period, I do not think it would have been possible. Even the attempt to begin would have been impossible, simply because this door does not exist from that side of the wall. Hence,

my need to enter the non-Native world to engage in this particular non-Native activity. On the second day of observation, a note to myself states, "I feel a lot better about this today" (FO:A#365,20).

The spontaneous translation required an intensive concentration. In order to record what is taking place, one has to take in the verbal Native language, nonverbal, environment, intercommunication of personalities and come up with a simultaneous English translation in the space of a few seconds.

The effort to be as unobtrusive in the classroom as possible required my actions and responses to blend in to the environment where after a few minutes, the children would forget I was there. I refrained from speaking the Native language so as not to deflect attention from the teacher and direct attention to myself. On the eighth day, at the end of the class, I spoke to the teacher in the Native language to set a time for the interview. At that moment, all eyes turned to me and one child said to me "You can speak Indian!" I was beset with a tide of inquisitive little faces. I played x & o's with them until the other teacher arrived for class and I left quietly (FO:C#215,11). This verified my knowledge that the response from the children indicated that it was highly unusual for a visitor to the school from the outside,

to speak their language. It would not have been possible to be a novelty and be inconspicuous at the same time.

The question then, is why I went through all this and subjected everyone else to my intrusion in order to conduct this research? My answer to the question is that I am very much concerned with the lack of input from Native researchers in Native educational issues, the depth that the trickle-down effect of the Native Learning Styles research has taken into Native curricula without question of its applicability and its appropriateness for Native students, and that it is about time that researchers indicated specifically that their recommendations are directed only at non-Native teachers to enable them to teach Native children more effectively, and stop the assumption that all teachers of Native students are non-Natives. There is a dire need to address the lack of recognition of Native teachers and their contributions to the education of Native students.

### Conclusions

#### Implications for Theory and Practice

The conclusion on the topic of Native learning styles is presented with the view that the preference to visual learning should not be taken as a need for the use of visuals as the primary method of instruction

when teaching Native children. If a non-Native teacher is experiencing problems explaining concepts verbally, then visuals should be used.

In the exercise involving the teacher's practical knowledge, most of the methods used by the Native teacher can be found in Sawyer's (1991) compiled list of suggestions for teachers of Native students from the Native Learning Styles literature (See Appendix A), with one noted exception -- the specific reference for visual learning preference. This does not appear anywhere in the Native teacher's teaching method which is based on traditional practical knowledge. Hence, my statement again, that this is known to be effective specifically for non-Native teachers.

Since the Native culture is seen as very important in the education of Native students, non-Native teachers would do well to make an effort to get to know and understand their students, the culture, and the community so that they may receive some direction in ensuring that their classrooms be places of positive learning experience and environment. A teacher of Native descent with no cultural experience or understanding would also be in the same situation as the non-Native teacher. There have been and there are many excellent non-Native teachers of Native children and their success can be attributed to learning,



accepting and adapting to the cultural mores of the community, the students, and the classroom.

The questioning and answering also includes another element not mentioned in the findings that is significant. It generally goes along the same lines as the asking for something, as in the case where I was asking a question. An implicit understanding exists between speakers where the option of misunderstanding frees the person answering the question to answer in a more comfortable way if he/she didn't want to answer the question asked. In this case, the person asking the question must not repeat the same question because to insist would be to insult the other person. In one instance, I had clearly asked the question 'why' but it was answered as 'when' (Sup.Int:C#7,1). The teacher took the option of misunderstanding. This option always exists in the wording of the conversation where an implied meaning, or even a direct one can be deflected, as happened here. If it was a personal and direct question, it gives the respondent the option of accepting the question or taking the misunderstanding which saves face for both parties.

On the language of instruction, where possible, instruction should be in the Native and English language to ensure comprehension of the subject matter and facilitate an easier transition in the student's

translation processes.

The Native teachers also stated that it was of utmost importance that the language of instruction in the formative years during primary and junior grades be in the Native language.

Native teacher education programs should also address issues in the curriculum guidelines, research literature, teacher education pedagogy, and other areas that are contradictory to cultural beliefs and practices, and those that elicit negative reactions from Native students. Flexible areas in the program also need to be explored to accommodate cultural values and methods of teaching required in a Native cultural classroom environment. A point to note here is that during the examination of the traditional practical knowledge, the Native teacher's methods contradicted the teacher education program's instruction on classroom control and discipline practices, lesson plans, and so on.

Rather than simply 'plugging in' Native content to existing European based subjects, the curriculum itself could also be established within the Native cultural foundation and the various subjects naturally stemming from it. There are means and ways of teaching math, science, environmental studies, and so on, based on traditional cultural knowledge.

### Implications for Further Research

The teasing in the classroom would be worth further study to determine at which grade this would tend to start and which grade it reaches its peak before it starts to decline and eventually reach the stage of respectable social interaction between adults.

The other element to this would be to determine how the inhibited behaviour of the female students in the classroom affects their education levels.

Another topic would be the nonverbal behaviour as witnessed in the classroom. There was evidence that this exists in other classrooms with the same students but different teachers and that this was adapted between the students and the teachers in the classroom. The question would be to determine if this also happens in the classrooms of other communities and whether the same nonverbal behaviours are used. This would of course have to be in the classrooms of Native teachers because the situation would be drastically different in a non-Native teacher's classroom. Video cameras placed in each corner of the room would record the nonverbal behaviour. It would not however, be possible for the camera to catch and record the nonverbal communication because it involves the intuitive, implicit, and interpersonal elements, where you have to 'feel' it in order to interpret it

properly.

The Native teachers also stated that they considered it very important that Native teachers be from the community. One reason for this emerged from the observation that the Native teachers from the community seemed to be the ones to respond to and aid students in distress and thus had the additional role of assisting and supporting other teachers and the principal in dealing with the students. Further research could explore the role of resident Native teachers to determine if this situation is the same in other communities.

The fact remains that at that particular time, there were no female Native teachers in the school and it would have been interesting if female teachers would have expressed the same things as the males. Of particular interest would have been the affect that their past education had on their teaching methods. (Reynold's (1991) study includes an interview with a female Native teacher from the same community).

The Native teacher's traditional practical knowledge could also be documented as it is practised by a particular teacher from the beginning of the class in September to the end of class in June to determine its content, the changes or its consistency throughout the year.

I will state again the importance and the need for more Native researchers involved in studies on Native educational issues.

#### Concluding Comments

This study has only lightly touched on several elements of the cultural environment of the classroom and whether these will be recognized and acknowledged by others will remain to be seen.

Having explored the meaning of learning and understanding, a parable comes to mind from Marashio's (1982) reference to Old Man Hat's concluding statement to his nephew: "After you've suffered, then for all your knowing, you'll have a handful of things, and you'll look at them and won't know what to do with them. But you'll use them all the time" (p.7). This statement can be understood at another level, that after all their educational experience, Native teachers may not fully understand what they know, but it is there, reflected in their daily classroom practices.

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Appendix A:

## Sawyer's Suggestions for Teachers

From: Sawyer, Don. (1991) Native Learning Styles: Shorthand for Instructional Adaptations? Canadian Journal of Native Education, Vol. 18, Number 1, University of Alberta. pp.99-105.

Specifically, research suggests that successful instructors of Native students tend to

1. share classroom control and responsibility;
2. reduce formal lecturing;
3. avoid "spotlighting" --singling students out for praise, criticism, or response;
4. allow students to retain control over their learning;
5. allow students to privately rehearse a skill before demonstrating competency publicly;
6. accommodate visual learning preferences, especially for new and difficult material;
7. use more student-directed small groups;
8. de-emphasize academic competition;
9. assist students to integrate and synthesize new material with prior knowledge and experience;
10. favour essay tests over objective exams;
11. emphasize cooperative and collaborative learning;
12. allow students to discuss information in a non-competitive atmosphere;
13. use more global, holistic instructional approaches;
14. utilize warmer and more personal teaching styles;
15. establish close personal relationships with students;
16. actively demand while remaining personally warm;
17. be sensitive to nonverbal cues;
18. accept silence;
19. allow longer pauses after asking questions;
20. establish a pace and flow consistent with that of the students;
21. use smooth, less abrupt transitions between lessons;
22. utilize slower, more personal helping modes;
23. avoid excess verbalization;
24. listen as well as talk;
25. utilize minimal teacher direction;
26. negotiate a "culture of the classroom";
27. become part of the community;
28. use experiential learning techniques;
29. discuss learning styles with students;
30. be sensitive to student backgrounds and

- experiences;
31. be aware of discourse patterns and discussion styles of their students;
  33. be aware of proximity and other nonverbal preferences;
  34. emphasize development of self-esteem, confidence, empowerment, and capacity to affect change;
  35. help students understand the need to "decontextualize" thought in writing and provide the skills to do it;
  36. emphasize dialogue based on mutual respect;
  37. use a whole language, integrated approach that emphasizes the words and experiences of the students;
  38. recognize potential conflicts between student language/cultural backgrounds and school-based expectations (e.g., linear theses-support essays) and discuss these formal expectation with students;
  39. emphasize a writing process approach rather than a grammar-based subskills method of writing instruction;
  40. provide appropriate, effective, and adequate counselling and support services;
  41. build life skills into programs;
  42. avoid stereotyping: they consider all of the above as mere tendencies, and validate everything for themselves.

Appendix B:

## General Guide for Interviews

1. Is this your home community?
2. Why did you decide to go into teaching?
3. How long have you been teaching?
4. Have you always taught in Native communities?
5. Did you ever have a Native teacher when you were a student?
6. If Yes - how did that make you feel?  
Why?  
If No - would it have made any difference in how you felt about school?  
Why?
7. How do you discipline students in your classroom?
8. What does 'Native culture' mean to you?  
Why?